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Immanent Transcendence

Francisco Suárez's Doctrine of Being

Victor M. Salas

Leuven University Press

IMMANENT TRANSCENDENCE
FRANCISCO SUÁREZ'S DOCTRINE OF BEING

ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY

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To Liz and the children: Manny, Adrienne, Madeline, and Dominic
—Victor M. Salas

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Preface

To say that I came to the study of Francisco Suárez kicking and screaming would be an exaggeration, but only slightly so. When I began my graduate philosophy studies I was eager to learn about the metaphysical thought of Thomas Aquinas. I therefore considered it my good fortune when I was assigned to John P. Doyle as his graduate research assistant. Here was a man who had studied under some of the greatest twentieth-century Thomists: Étienne Gilson, Joseph Owens, and Armand Maurer, to name only a few. That Doyle had a thorough command of Thomas's thought was, to my mind, beyond doubt, and till the end of his life he considered himself a "Gilsonian Existential Thomist." But as time went by, I came to learn that what he really wanted to talk and write about was late scholastic Jesuit philosophy, in particular, that of the *Doctor eximius*, Francisco Suárez. To study with Doyle, then, was to receive a crash course in late scholastic metaphysics, and what an education that was! It was he who introduced me to the metaphysics of Suárez.

I found that reading Suárez was very different than reading Thomas Aquinas. Certainly Thomas, just as much as Suárez, was deeply embedded within a rich philosophico-theological tradition, but the comprehensive scope with which the Jesuit thinker evaluated vast, diverse, and often competing traditions both within and outside the Christian theological framework was simply a wonder to behold. Even Gilson, a staunch critic of Suárez if ever there was one, concedes that point. What is more, Suárez's relationship to the history of philosophy and, in particular, his place within the Christian theological tradition is, to use Jorge Gracia's term, that of a 'problematicist,'[1] that is, one who regards "past philosophical positions as answers to philosophical problems of concern to all philosophers and thus as useful in the search for the solution to those problems."[2]

Suárez frames perennial philosophical problems in such a way that the theses of historically and culturally diverse thinkers (e.g., Aristotle, Avicenna, Averroes, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus) are able to interact meaningfully and fruitfully in an ongoing philosophical conversation. While it might be too much to say that the Jesuit affords us an historiographical reconstruction of various authors and their texts after the fashion of eighteenth-century practices, he nevertheless pays careful attention to those texts and the arguments contained therein. If the *Disputationes metaphysicae* offers not so much a history of metaphysics, it can at least rightly be

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[1] Gracia, *Philosophy and Its History: Issues in Philosophical Historiography* (Buffalo, NY: SUNY Press, 1991), 268-73.

[2] Ibid., 268.

considered a "compendium" of metaphysics.[3] I found the new problematics that Suárez introduced intriguing and his solutions compelling. Eventually, I came to the realization that on at least a few matters the *Doctor eximius* might actually be right, and, dare I think it, that Gilson's read of him—if not simply wrong—was woefully misguided.

I underwent nothing less than a paradigm shift in my own philosophical outlook and understanding of medieval thought when I came to the conclusion, unsettling—but also freeing—as it was, that Gilson was not entirely correct about the nature of medieval metaphysics, at least not in his blanket accusation of 'essentialism' for all medieval thinkers, especially with respect to Scotus and Suárez. Perhaps I should be embarrassed by this acknowledgment, but surely I am not the only person in my discipline to succumb to hero worship. At any rate, I gradually came to perceive that Thomas Aquinas was not the sole metaphysician of existence. Suárez too had much to say on the subject and, as I came to realize, organized his doctrine of being in reference thereto. If it was the case that many of his interpreters thought otherwise, then it would certainly be worthwhile writing a book to allow Suárez—or at least one sympathetic to his thought—to make his own case against them.

Be that as it may, I consider myself fortunate to know personally many of the interpreters whom I engage in the present volume. Even when critical of their interpretations or in complete disagreement, I can say without reservation and in complete candor that I respect their scholarship and erudition from which I have benefited tremendously over the years! This is especially true with respect to Doyle, *magister meus*. Though I challenge and critique Doyle's Gilsonian-inspired interpretation of Suárez, let me be clear: I hold him in the highest esteem not only as a first-ranked scholar but also—and more importantly—as a person, who is marked by his charity, generosity, and magnanimity. I owe him more than I myself shall ever fully recognize. It is my hope some day to live up to the standard that he has set for me as a person and a scholar. It is in friendship and good will that I offer these scholars and the larger academic community the present volume.

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[3] Ibid., 27.

Acknowledgments

I owe a debt of gratitude to Marco Forlivesi and Sydney Penner for their careful and meticulous treatment of an early draft of this volume. Their comments and suggestions were invaluable, perspicacious, and helped improve the final version tremendously. The contribution of their scholarly talents to this project is beyond generous. I also benefited from very helpful conversations regarding Suárezian and medieval metaphysics with Rolf Darge and Daniel Heider. I am truly fortunate to be able to bounce ideas off the heads of such tremendous scholars. I am also grateful for the support and advice that my colleagues—Philip Blosser, Robert Fastiggi, and John Michael McDermott, S.J.—offered me throughout this project. Russell Friedman has also been especially encouraging and helpful in realizing this project. Finally, I am beyond grateful for the support and encouragement that my wife—who is also my colleague—Elizabeth gave me. While there may be no greater love than to lay down one's life for his friends, reading multiple drafts of a spouse's manuscript comes in at a close second; or at least it should!

Note on Textual Sources

I have made exclusive use of the Luis Vivès edition of Suárez's *opera omnia* (Paris, 1856-1878). While it is not entirely free of errors nor is it a critical edition of the Jesuit's work, it remains fairly reliable, readily accessible to most researchers (at least as online scans), and is generally considered the standard edition for scholarly use. With respect to the *Disputationes metaphysicae* (abbreviated as *DM* in my references), I cite it according to dispute, section, and paragraph number. All citations of the Vivès *opera omnia* include parenthetical references to the volume and page numbers. Translations of all the Latin texts used herein are my own unless otherwise stated.

Introduction

1. The Life and Work of Francisco Suárez

In his own time, Francisco Suárez was referred to as the "light of Spain and of the whole Church"[1] and regarded among Jesuit scholastic philosophers as "*Gigas Franciscus Suarez*."[2] During the past few centuries, however, his thought has remained largely neglected in the Anglophone world. While volumes devoted to the metaphysical outlook of medieval philosophers such as Anselm, Bonaventure, Duns Scotus, and especially Thomas Aquinas abound on modern bookshelves, treatments of Suárez's metaphysics, with a few exceptions, remain mostly confined to non-English studies. On those rare occasions in which Suárez's metaphysics finds its way into English-language investigations, it is often maligned and identified as the progenitor of the philosophical ills that, over time, have metastasized and now plague contemporary thought.[3] My hope in the present volume is not only to give Suárez the philosophical attention he justly deserves, but also to set the record straight, so to speak, regarding the nature of his metaphysical doctrine.

On 5 January 1548 in Granada, Francisco Suárez was born during the height of the Spanish Golden Age in which blossomed a flourishing second scholasticism.[4] Though the Iberian Peninsula enjoyed a resplendent intellectual and cultural climate, Suárez's own academic promise contrasted with a lackluster mediocrity. Aged only thirteen years, he went to the university at Salamanca, one of the premier universities in Iberia—if not in all of Europe itself—to study canon law.[5] His academic performance was abysmal, but his time at Salamanca afforded him the opportunity to become acquainted with some members of the Society of Jesus (i.e., the Jesuits) who preached there. One Jesuit, Juan Ramirez, served as a model for Suárez and inspired the young man to join the fledgling Society.[6] To complete the picture of Suárez's ineptitude, even his efforts to join the Jesuits failed. It was only after a number of appeals that he was finally admitted but only with the status of an "indifferent." As an "indifferent," the Society made no commitment to him

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[1] Pedro Hurtado de Mendoza, *Universa philosophia*, Metaph., d. 1, s. 2, § 48 (Lyon, 1624: 700): "… P. Francisc. Suarez clarissimum non solum Societatis, & Hispaniae lumen, sed etiam Ecclesiae totius…."

[2] Rodrigo de Arriaga, *Cursus philosophicus* (Paris, 1639), *praefatio*.

[3] This is especially true of the narrative developed by Radical Orthodoxy with respect to Suárez. I shall discuss some of its tenets in what follows.

[4] Joseph Henry Fichter, *Francis Suarez: Man of Spain* (New York, NY: MacMillan Company, 1940), 6. Cf. Raoul de Scorraille, *François Suarez de la Compagnie de Jésus* (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1912), vol. 1, 13-16.

[5] Fichter, *Francis Suarez*, 38.

[6] Ibid., 51.

regarding ordination to the priesthood. If deemed more appropriate, Suárez could just be kept as a lay brother.[7]

A remarkable phenomenon occurred, however, early in Suárez's tenure as a religious. The young novice transformed—almost overnight—into an intellectual titan.[8] Many of his biographers are at a loss to explain this radical change, and Raoul de Scorraille goes so far as to suggest that divine intervention was at play. In particular, De Scorraille surmises that the intercession of Mary, the Mother of God, may have been responsible since reports of similar miraculous interventions appear in the cases of Albertus Magnus and Duns Scotus.[9] Whatever the explanation, the change in Suárez's intellectual abilities was beyond doubt, and the Society of Jesus soon put him to work instructing novices in both philosophy and theology.

Eventually ordained a priest on 25 March 1572, the Feast of the Annunciation,[10] Suárez's teaching career soon after went into full swing. Between 1574 and 1580, he taught theology at Valladolid, followed by a stint at the Jesuit Collegium Romanum.[11] While he taught on a variety of theological topics, Suárez concluded his Roman sojourn with a focus on the Incarnation. He resumed his Christological work at Alcalá, his next teaching assignment, where he published his first work, the *De Incarnatione*, in 1590. That text was followed two years later by another Christological treatise, this time devoted to the life of Christ, the *De Mysteriis Vitae Christi*.[12]

Illness, fatigue, and personal tensions building with his colleague, Gabriel Vázquez, led Suárez to leave Alcalá for Salamanca in 1593.[13] At Salamanca Suárez was at peace to think and write. It was there that he interrupted his theological work, which consisted in his commenting on the *tertia pars* of Thomas Aquinas's *Summa theologiae*, and undertook his massive metaphysical project, the *Disputationes metaphysicae*. In that work, Suárez brought to greater realization an emerging trend in which metaphysics was treated *ex professo*, systematically, comprehensively, and according to the exigencies of its own inner logic. Diego Mas and Chrysostomus Javellus had already published works that sought to systematize metaphysics rather than offer a mere commentary on the Aristotelian work of the same name. The *Disputationes metaphysicae*, published in 1597, would be a sea change in the way metaphysics was conducted thereafter. As it turned out, 1597 was also the year that Suárez was sent, begrudgingly, to the university at Coimbra.[14]

Philip II, the king of Spain, wished to exert the Spanish crown's influence over the entire Iberian peninsula and so chose to send one of his premier (Spanish)

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7 Ibid.; De Scorraille, *François Suarez*, vol. 1, 46.
8 Ibid., 69.
9 De Scorraille, *François Suarez*, vol. 1, 61.
10 Ibid., vol. 1, 133; Fichter, *Man of Spain*, 96.
11 Ibid., vol. 1, 169; Fichter, *Man of Spain*, 111-31.
12 Ibid., vol. 1, 250-55; Fichter, *Man of Spain*, 154.
13 Ibid., vol. 1, 296-314.
14 Ibid., vol. 1, 329-32.

theologians to the Portuguese city. The busy teaching schedule and interruption to his life that Coimbra posed stood in marked contrast to the relative tranquility that had been enjoyed at Salamanca. It is hardly surprising that Suárez was less than enthusiastic about the king's plans, which the Jesuit graciously declined. Philip II would, nevertheless, have his way, and Suárez eventually assumed the principle chair of theology at Coimbra.[15] There the Jesuit continued his work as a theologian and authored many of his most notable texts. Between 1601 and 1603, he began work on what would eventually become the *De legibus*.[16] As massive as the *Disputationes metaphysicae*, the *De legibus* covered all aspects of law—divine, natural, international, positive, and canon—across ten books.

Despite his speculative inclinations, on occasion Suárez found himself immersed in various controversies. One such controversy involved a *dubium* concerning the validity of epistolary confession. Suárez had thought that a decree promulgated by the Holy Office in 1602 maintained that *both* the confession of one's sins and absolution could not occur in the absence of a priest. This meant, to his thinking, that one could still make an epistolary confession *in absentia* through a messenger but subsequently receive absolution in the presence of a priest. In 1603, the Holy Office issued yet another decree on the matter that repudiated Suárez's interpretation.[17] His reputation would soon be rehabilitated, however, when in 1607 Suárez authored the *De immunitate ecclesiastica contra Venetos* in defense of papal power against Venetian confiscation of religious property. In recognition of that effort, Pope Paul V bestowed the title *Doctor eximius ac pius* upon Suárez.[18] More noteworthy still is Suárez's critique of King James I's demand for an oath of fidelity. In the *Defensio fidei catholicae adversus anglicanae sectae errores* Suárez subjected James's policy to severe critique and provided nothing less than a systematic tractate on political philosophy.[19]

After nearly twenty years, Suárez retired from his position at Coimbra in July 1615.[20] Despite his frail health, he remained active in his retirement and produced a number of texts including the *De gratia*, *De religione*, *De angelis*, and his massive *Tractatus de anima*. Finally, in an effort to find a climate better suiting his health, Suárez travelled to Lisbon, where he passed from earthly life on 25 September 1617.[21] Though Lisbon was under interdict at the time (i.e., a city-wide excommunication) owing to a squabble over ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction, that

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15 Ibid., vol. 1, 335.

16 Fichter, *Man of Spain*, 240-41.

17 Heinrich Denzinger, *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, eds. Robert Fastiggi and Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2010), nn. 1994-95.

18 Fichter, *Man of Spain*, 272-73.

19 Ibid., 295.

20 Ibid., 325-27.

21 Ibid., 338.

sanction was temporarily lifted so that funeral rites could be properly celebrated for such a monumental theologian.[22]

2. The Theological Context and Purpose of the Suárezian Metaphysics[23]

There can be no doubt that the vast portion of Suárez's scholarly output was devoted to theological matters. He was, after all, a professional theologian. This circumstance gives rise to the following question: would a theologian who authors a metaphysical work philosophize in complete neglect of, or be oblivious to, his theological commitments? There are a number of interpreters who would have us believe so.[24] Often ignored by these same interpreters, however, is the broader theological setting of Suárez's project. While Étienne Gilson acknowledges that the *Disputationes metaphysicae*, in a certain sense, represents a holdover from the medieval (theological) practice of *disputatio*, he thinks that Suárez's work nevertheless manifests something truly modern insofar as it "breaks away" from the text of the Aristotelian *Metaphysics* and is "purely philosophical" in content.[25] Jean-François Courtine makes a similar claim and even goes so far as to suggest that the Suárezian metaphysics is "quasi- or pre-Cartesian." It shifts away from the Aristotelian text and turns "*ad res ipsas*" rather than "*ad Aristotelem*," whose metaphysics is "*the* metaphysics" insofar as the Stagirite is himself "*the* philosopher."[26] Yet should one castigate Suárez for turning to the "things themselves" in order to discern their truth? Does pursuing *res ipsas* really represent a rupture with Aristotelian thought, let alone with the Christian theological tradition to which Suárez is, as a theologian, firmly committed? It is worth noting that even Thomas Aquinas—whom surely neither Gilson nor Courtine would locate among the pantheon of Enlightenment thinkers—similarly values the truth of 'things themselves,' for: "The study of philosophy is not for knowing what men have thought, but how the truth of things stands."[27] Indeed, turning to 'things themselves' is precisely what Aristotle himself does. Should we reprove the Philosopher for pursuing his project?

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[22] Ibid.

[23] Some material from the present section can also be found in my "The Theological Orientation of Francisco Suárez's Metaphysics," *Pensamiento* 74 (2018): 7-29.

[24] See Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, vol. 5 *The Realm of Metaphysics in the Modern Age* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1991), 21-29; see Milbank, *The Word Made Strange: Theology, Language, Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 40; Adrian Pabst, *Metaphysics: The Creation of Hierarchy* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2012), 309; John Montag, "The False Legacy of Suárez," in eds., John Milbank, Catherine Pitstock, and Graham Ward, *Radical Orthodoxy* (London: Routledge, 1999), 38-63.

[25] Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1952), 96-97.

[26] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1990), 326-27.

[27] Thomas, *In de caelo et mundo* (ed. Spiazzi, Taurin-Rome: Marietti, 1952: 109), lib. 1, lect. 22, n. 8: "… studium philosophiae non est ad hoc quod sciatur quid homines senserint, sed qualiter se habeat veritas rerum."

If, like Thomas, Suárez pursues the "truth of things," it is because, as Alfred Freddoso rightly points out, metaphysics "has a [1] great instrumental as well as [2] intrinsic value."[28] Too many interpreters have failed to consider the *Disputationes metaphysicae* in terms of [1] this "instrumental value" and have focused, instead, only on [2] the internal structure that Suárez provides by means of his systematic approach. An unfortunate consequence of this uneven focus is that metaphysics and theology are not only rendered distinct, but separate as well. Jorge Gracia, for example, appears to operate with this kind of interpretation and thinks that Suárez's approach to metaphysics "situates him at the beginning of the modern tradition."[29] In contrast, medieval theologians, such as Aquinas, utilize metaphysics in order to make more manifest the intelligibility of divine revelation. For the (Christian) medieval theologian, there can be no doubt that, between philosophy and theology, the latter is the higher or "more worthy" (*dignior*) science. Nevertheless, it remains the case that sacred theology, which reflects critically upon the mysteries of the faith, 'depends'—at least in a certain sense—upon philosophical science. According to Thomas Aquinas, it does not depend upon philosophy for epistemic warrant or justification; rather, theology depends upon philosophy as upon a "handmaid" (*ancilla*). That which is most true and evident in itself can, through its metaphysical handmaid, be made more intelligible to the human intellect.[30] Accordingly, the need for philosophy (especially metaphysics) does not stem from any want or defect within theological science itself, but from the weakness of our own human intellect, which, because it is finite, can only grasp the sublime truths of divine revelation dimly and in a limited fashion.[31] What this means is that, for the medieval theologian, metaphysics, far from constituting an autonomous discipline—'autonomous' in the sense of bracketing out or excluding any faith commitments much as what Descartes does in his *Meditationes de Prima Philosophia*—self-consciously operates upon a theological horizon laden with specific creedal commitments. Accordingly, theology brings to bear upon the metaphysician new questions and hitherto unknown problems (e.g., the distinction between person and nature, infinitude as a perfection, the relationship between essence and existence, etc.) that call for new solutions.[32]

As is evident from the *ratio operis* that he provides for the *Disputationes metaphysicae*, Suárez fundamentally shares this same (medieval) perspective regarding the

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[28] Freddoso, *On Creation, Conservation and Concurrence:* Metaphysical Disputations *20, 21, and 22* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 2002), vi.

[29] Gracia, "Francisco Suárez: The Man in History," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 62 (1991): 263.

[30] Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 2.1.993b9-10.

[31] Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 5, ad 2.

[32] For example, in his discussion of the relationship among suppositum, nature, and subsistence—all of which are central topics with respect to the mysteries of the Trinitiy and the Incarnation—Suárez points out that Aristotle never really addresses the question whether suppositum adds anything distinct to nature. The reason for that is that Aristotle, not having received revelation, was unaware of the metaphysical issues pertaining to these theological mysteries. See *DM* 34.2.19

relationship between metaphysics and theology. Despite Gilson's claim that that work is "purely philosophical" in content, sundry theological topics—the Eucharist,[33] the Trinity,[34] the Incarnation,[35] Mariology,[36] and so forth—arise frequently throughout its pages. Nor is it the case that when they arise Suárez "apologizes" for their inclusion within his metaphysical discussions, as Gracia suggests.[37] They are not merely examples meant to illustrate some metaphysical conclusion. Rather, they direct Suárez's reasoning and help him discern and confirm what must in fact be metaphysically true. Along those lines, Jesús Iturrioz has defended the fascinating thesis that certain portions of the *Disputationes metaphysicae* (viz., *DM* 31 and *DM* 34) emerged as a consequence of Suárez's reworking of a (lost) theological *opusculum* devoted to the Incarnation.[38] Evidence for Iturrioz's claim can be found, at least in part, in Suárez's discussion regarding the nature of the distinction between essence and existence in creatures. Both real and modal distinctions, Suárez thinks, are inadequate for accommodating the exigencies of the Incarnation; only a rational distinction will serve that purpose.[39] For that reason, a rational distinction is favored by all theologians "who think humanity could not be assumed by the Word without a proper existence."[40]

The point here is that, even beyond any Christological concerns, Suárez always considers the broader theological implications of the metaphysical theses he defends. Indeed, just as much as Thomas Aquinas, the Jesuit constructs his metaphysical project precisely for the service of theology. Thus, as Jacob Schmutz maintains, while the Suárezian metaphysics has its own autonomy of method (in the sense I shall soon describe), it does not enjoy a "finality" (*finalité*) unto itself.[41] Suárez explains as follows:

> To the extent that no one is able to be an accomplished theologian unless he first establishes a firm foundation of metaphysics, so I have always understood a work would be of value, prior to writing the theological commentaries… [so] I send forward this work, diligently elaborated, which now I offer to you, Christian reader.[42]

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33 See, e.g., *DM* 5.3.16; ibid., 7.2.10, 19; ibid., 8.7.25; ibid., 13.7.6

34 See, e.g., *DM* 4.8.9; ibid., 5.5.6; ibid., 7.1.16; ibid., 7.2.5, 27; ibid., 10.3.7, 11.

35 See, e.g., *DM* 1.6.29; ibid., 5.1.2; ibid., 28.2.14; ibid., 31.1.10.

36 See, e.g., *DM* 9.1.18; ibid., 23.4.7; ibid., 31.12.15.

37 Gracia, "Francisco Suárez: The Man in History," 263.

38 Iturrioz, "Un primer opúsculo de Suárez desconocido hasta hora (*De essentia, existentia et subsistentia*)," *Estudios Escolasticos* 18 (1944): 330-59.

39 For Suárez's understanding of these various distinctions, see *DM* 7. Very broadly, real and modal distinctions are based on a distinction within some thing itself antecedent to any operation of the intellect. A rational distinction, however, emerges fundamentally from the intellect's consideration.

40 Cf. *DM* 31.1.12 (vol. 26, 228): "Possunt etiam in favorem hujus sententiae adduci omnes Theologi, qui sentient humanitatem non potuisse a Verbo assume sine propria existentia…."

41 Schmutz, "Science divine et métaphysique chez Francisco Suárez" in *Francisco Suárez 'Der ist der Mann": Homenaje al prof. Salvador Castellote* (Series Valentina, 50), ed. Jacob Schmutz (Valencia: Facultad de Teologia 'San Vicente Ferrer,' 2004), 353.

42 *DM*, ratio et discursus totius operis (vol. 25, n.p.): "Quemadmodum fieri nequit ut quis Theologus perfectus evadat, nisi firma prius metaphysicae jecerit fundamenta, ita intellexit semper, operae

There are at least three important points to make regarding this passage. First, it clearly identifies the theological purpose of the *Disputationes metaphysicae*, which Suárez composes for the sake of his students' theological formation. Second, he addresses his work to a Christian audience, which is to say, to one who shares the same creedal presuppositions that will inform his metaphysical project. Third, Suárez indicates that this metaphysical treatise is so necessary to his work as a theologian, which consists in commenting upon Thomas Aquinas's *Summa theologiae*, that he could no longer carry out that professorial (i.e., pedagogical) task without first making explicit the metaphysical principles at work within it:

> Daily, however, I perceived in clearer light, that this divine and supernatural theology wants and needs [*desideraret et requireret*] this human and natural [science] to such a degree that I did not hesitate to interrupt the yet incomplete work, so as to give this doctrine of metaphysics its seat or, more preferably, to restore it to its proper place.[43]

If it is the case that Suárez inscribes metaphysics within his larger theological project, then Alasdair McIntyre's claim that Suárez, "both in his preoccupations and in his methods," was "more authentically" a modern thinker than even Descartes himself dissolves.[44] McIntyre argues that, "For Suárez the notion of working within a tradition had clear relevance for theology but not in what he took to be the timeless studies of the philosopher."[45] However, if Suárez's metaphysics is conducted upon a theological horizon, concern for tradition remains critical insofar as tradition is itself the binding thread of theology. Suárez's self-conscious embeddedness within the Christian theological tradition is especially true if one considers the pedagogical role that he takes the *Disputationes metaphysicae* to fill. With that text, the master theologian prepares his apprentice(s) with the requisite tools and formation necessary to become a practitioner of theological craft. Even Gilson recognizes Suárez's unparalleled mastery of the 'tools' intrinsic to theological practice:

> Suarez enjoys such a knowledge of mediaeval philosophy as to put to shame any modern historian of mediaeval thought. On each and every question he seems to know everybody and everything, and to read his book is like attending the Last Judgment of four centuries of Christian speculation.[46]

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pretium fuisse ut, antequam Theologica scriberem Commentaria… opus hoc, quod nunc, Christiane lector, tibi offero, diligenter elaboratum praemitterem."

43 Ibid. (vol. 25): "In dies tamen luce clarius intuebar, quam illa divina ac supernaturalis Theologia hanc humanum et naturalem desideraret ac requireret, adeo ut non dubitaverim illud inchoatum opus palisper intermittere, quo huic doctrinae metaphysicae suum quasi locum ac sedem darem, vel potius restituerem."

44 MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopedia, Genealogy, and Tradition* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 73.

45 Ibid.

46 Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 99.

Suárez presents the same view regarding the relationship between philosophy and theology in one of his properly theological works: the *De Deo uno et trino*. That work opens with a twofold distinction concerning the nature of theology that is similar to one that Aquinas makes in his commentary on Boethius's *De Trinitate*.[47] There is, on the one hand, a "natural" theology and, on the other, an "infused or supernatural" theology.[48] Appealing to Psalms and Romans, Suárez explains that natural (theological) knowledge of God can be attained from the world, which "announces the glory of God" (Ps 19:1), and that "the invisible things of God can be known by the intellect through those things that are made" (Rom. 1:20).[49] It is his theological commitments that assure Suárez of natural reason's ability to perceive not only the intelligible structure of the world but also its metaphysical origin in a transcendent creator-God. The principles of supernatural theology, however, derive from divine revelation and exceed the capacity of natural human reason.[50] Indeed, supernatural truths are not known by the natural light of reason at all but only through the "light of faith,"[51] on account of which such truths transcend metaphysics entirely.[52] Given both this distinction between the two kinds of theology and their mutual reciprocity, the question arises: how are these two modes of discourse related? That is, does one have primacy over the other?

In answer to that question, Gracia suggests that, for Suárez, metaphysics is somehow "anterior to theology."[53] Moreover, Gracia thinks that this anteriority is evidence that Suárez has quite a different "attitude" with respect to the relationship between philosophy and theology than what had been the case with medieval theologians. What does this mean though? While Suárez undeniably marks a distinction between philosophy and theology, he is not for that reason any different from his medieval predecessors who drew a similar distinction.[54] If Suárez is to be set apart from medieval theologians, it is because his "aim is to show the reader how to apply metaphysical principles to theology rather than to use theology to prove philosophy."[55] Marco Forlivesi similarly thinks that Suárez does not clarify

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47 Cf. Thomas, *De Trinitate*, q. 5, a. 4.

48 *De Deo uno et trino*, prooem. (vol. 1, xxiii): "Universa fere, quae Deo, ut unus est, attribuuntur, duplici theologia cognosci possunt, naturali, et infusa, seu supernaturali."

49 Ibid. (vol. 1, xxiii): "Naturali quidem, quatenus, *coeli enarrant gloriam Dei*, quod de elementis, animalibus, et praesertim de ipsius hominis natura dici potuisset. Propter quod generalius Paulus dixit, *invisibilia Dei per ea, quae facta sunt, intellect conspiciuntur, sempiterna quoque ejus virtus, ac divinitas*…." Cf. Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 2, a. 2, *sed contra*.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid (vol. 1, xxiv): "Si autem considerentur nostrae Theologiae proprietates, ut aliquo modo supernaturales sunt, habent dependentiam a lumine fidei, et sine illius doctrina intelligi non possunt…."

52 *DM* 30.4.7 (vol. 26, 76): "Neque circa hanc veritatem occurrit difficultas specialis, praeter eas que spectant ad Trinitatis mysterium, quod metaphysicam considerationem transcendit." Cf. ibid., 30.5.6.

53 Gracia, "Francisco Suárez: The Man in History," 263.

54 Freddoso, *On Creation, Conservation and Concurrence*, x.

55 Gracia, "Francisco Suárez: The Man in History," 263.

what it means for philosophy to be "subservient [*subservire*] to piety and revealed theology."[56] Suárez, it seems to him, never "proceeds *a divinis ad humana*."[57] What it means to go from theology to philosophy or "prove philosophy" with theology could be debated, but surely what is not controversial is the claim that medieval theologians recognized that their theological commitments were non-negotiable in any philosophical inquiry, which was itself directed to the service of theology. Suárez's outlook is no different, and he unapologetically accords primacy to theology over metaphysics. As he tells us in both his *De Deo uno et trino* and *Disputationes metaphysicae*, natural theology (i.e., metaphysics) is ancillary to supernatural theology insofar as the former serves the latter as a "minister" and helps confirm its supernatural truths.[58]

Does it make sense to say, then, as do Hans Urs von Balthasar and John Milbank, that the metaphysical project Suárez undertakes is 'autonomous'?[59] Obviously, at stake here is the meaning of 'autonomous.' Freddoso and Jacob Schmutz acknowledge that there is, for Suárez, a "limited autonomy" to the philosophical disciplines. In this limited sense, we might say that for metaphysics to be autonomous simply means that it both unfolds according to its own inner logic and is fundamentally "perfective of the human mind"[60] in that it satisfies the natural desire to know, which Aristotle, without the benefit of revelation, identifies as constitutive of the human condition.[61] Here, once again, the Jesuit is no different from his medieval predecessors in granting a limited form of autonomy to the philosophical disciplines, including metaphysics.[62] There is, however, a stronger sense of 'autonomy' in which metaphysics is understood as "wholly independent of theology."[63] Once separated from theology and allowed to chart its own course, it is difficult to see

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56 *DM*, ratio et discursus (vol. 25, n.p.): " … quae pietati ac doctrinae revelatae subservire magis viderentur."

57 Cf. Forlivesi, "C'è una filosofia nell'opera di Francisco Suárez? Il caso della dottrina sul 'verbum mentis' tra 'auctoritates' e argomenti di ragione," *Rinascimento* 48 (2008): 397-450. I cite the online version found at http://web.tiscali.it/marcoforlivesi/mf2009sv.pdf: "Posso invece dire che in nessuno di questi luoghi il nostro autore [i.e., Suárez] procede *a divinis ad humana*" (20). Here, Forlivesi's focus is on the *verbum mentis*, which he does not see Suárez establishing on the basis of theological claims, particularly, those pertaining to the Trinity. One might point out, however, that there are other metaphysical theses that Suárez defends in concert with his theological commitments. Suárez's thinking about the aforementioned distinction between essence and existence within creatures as well as his thinking on the nature of subsistence, for instance, are certainly directed by Christological considerations.

58 *De Deo uno et trino* (vol. 1, xxiii): "Hinc factum est, ut theologi scholastici disputantes de Deo utramque theologiam promiscue tradiderint, quoniam licet per se, et ex instituto supernaturalem theologiam doceant, nam ex revelatis principiis procedunt, nihilominus naturali Theologia utuntur ut ministra, ad supernaturales veritates comfirmandas, et ut ex utriusque theologiae consonantia animus fidelis in illis veritatibus facilius conquiescat."

59 See von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, 21-29; see Milbank, *The Word Made Strange*, 40.

60 Freddoso, *On Creation, Conservation and Concurrence*, v.

61 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1.1.980a22.

62 Freddoso, *On Creation, Conservation and Concurrence*, vi.

63 Ibid., xi.

why metaphysics, governed by the exigencies of pure rationality, should ever have commerce with theology again, except to dismiss it as irrational (Hume) or to sequester it within the limits of "bare reason" (Kant). Appealing to an autonomous metaphysics would seem to undermine the theological project to which Suárez is committed. Yet, Hans Urs von Balthasar and John Milbank, for example, allege that Suárez has begotten precisely such a secularized ontology.[64] Adrian Pabst, taking his inspiration from Milbank's narrative concerning the decline of Western metaphysics, goes so far as to say: "Following Scotus, Suárez founds theology upon metaphysics, making 'metaphysical doctrine' an absolute prerequisite for all theological knowledge…."[65] Similarly, John Montag, a present-day order-brother of Suárez, thinks that: "Rather than direct his reorganization [of Christian education] directly according to formation in the life of faith as Thomas did, [Suárez] set as his foundation the life of reason, separating philosophy and theology as he had learned to do from Duns Scotus."[66]

There can be no doubt that Suárez learned many things from Scotus, but constructing a fully autonomous ontology was not one of them.[67] Indeed, in the Jesuit's view, metaphysics and theology are related in such a way that they are mutually enriching.[68]

> For thus these principles and truths of metaphysics are so bound with theological conclusions and discourse, that if the knowledge and perfect cognition of that [metaphysical] science be taken away, so also would [theological] science necessarily be greatly undermined.[69]

After noting the distinction between metaphysics and theology, Suárez insists that "our philosophy should be Christian and the servant [*ministra*] of divine theology."[70] He in no way brackets out his Christian commitments or theological presuppositions when pursuing his metaphysical task, for it is his Christian worldview that demands metaphysical illumination. Suárez even thinks that the mutual interrelationship between theology and metaphysics is such that theology itself can help illuminate and confirm those truths that pertain to metaphysics with a greater clarity and certitude than what human reason could attain on its own. Stemming

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64 See von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, 21-29; see Milbank, *The Word Made Strange*, 40.

65 Pabst, *Metaphysics*, 309.

66 Montag, "The False Legacy of Suárez," 53.

67 I do not intend to suggest that Duns Scotus himself developed a fully autonomous metaphysics.

68 Cf. Julio Söchting, "Perfecto en Humanidad: El misterio de la Encarnación como problema ontológico en las *Disputationes metaphysicae* de Francisco Suárez, S.J." Thesis, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, 2007, 34-38.

69 *DM* prooem. (vol. 25, 1): "Ita enim haec principia et veritates metaphysicae cum theologicis conclusionibus ac discursibus cohaerent, ut si illorum scientia ac perfecta cognitio auferatur, horum etiam scientiam nimium labefactari necesse sit."

70 Ibid., (vol. 25, n.pag.): "… nostram philosophiam debere christianam esse, ac divinae Theologiae ministram."

from the fact that they proceed by means of a "difference of light,"[71] metaphysics and theology are distinct sciences to be sure. Yet they form such an integral unity that, in Suárez's reckoning, theology can actually illuminate metaphysical truths. It can enrich metaphysics and give its principles an added strength and certitude.

Suárez makes this claim regarding certitude while wrestling with the apparent fact that mathematics seems to enjoy greater certitude than metaphysics. He notes that, in itself and absolutely speaking, metaphysics is more certain (*certior*) than mathematics since it is most especially concerned with first principles and treats the same things as mathematics, though from a more common or transcendental perspective. As such, the principles of mathematics are included within metaphysics itself, upon which the former depend.[72] A doubt arises, however, when considering the conditions that a human science imposes—whether, "to us," metaphysics is in fact more certain. The reason for this concern is that human science arises from sense knowledge, which is obscure and less capable of attaining the nature of things, and is abstracted from all sensible matter.[73]

Suárez's response to this doubt is rather instructive with respect to how he regards the mutually enriching relationship between theology and metaphysics. He explains that, in some cases, metaphysics can be more certain than mathematics. Though one attains metaphysics only through natural means proportionate to human nature (i.e., beginning with sense experience), there could occur the case in which our human intellect is aided or elevated (*juvetur*) in its discourse by some higher cause (i.e., God) through which the natural principles of things are known with a clarity and evidentness exceeding the certainty of mathematics. Suárez admits that this speculation pertains more to theology than philosophy, but his point is clear: a higher science can illuminate and make more manifest the same truth that a lower science can attain on its own. Though the issue under discussion in the present passage is the relationship between metaphysics and mathematics, there is no reason why the same situation should not hold with respect to theology and metaphysics. Supernatural theology should be able to illuminate certain metaphysical truths and give them greater clarity and certitude than could be attained through the exercise of one's own natural faculties alone.[74] Montag's interpretation has the unfortunate effect of inverting Suárez's actual teaching: "Whereas Aquinas sees 'theology which pertains to holy teaching' founded on principles separate from philosophy, but able to use philosophy to sort out the difficulties of discourse…, Suárez sees theology itself as standing on the structure provided by philosophy, specifically an ontologically univocal metaphysics. In order to speak about God,

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71 Cf. *DM* 1.1.5.

72 *DM* 1.5.23.

73 Ibid., 1.5.25.

74 Ibid., 1.5.26. Cf. Söchting, "Perfecto en Humanidad,"35-38.

one must begin with the clear foundation provided not by *sacra doctrina*, but the metaphysical structure of Being, which rises up to meet what is revealed."[75]

While one cannot doubt that the *Disputationes metaphysicae* assured for Suárez a distinct place in the history of metaphysics, that place is more nuanced than often appreciated. He was a first-class metaphysician, true, but more fundamentally a theologian who pressed metaphysics into the service and clarification of his theological project. It was to that end that he composed his *Disputationes metaphysicae*. What this means, then, is that the nature of Suárez's metaphysical project is different in kind from the autonomous projects that so many Enlightenment thinkers constructed. If it is the case that early modern ontology is framed not in relation to a theological horizon but in terms of the knowing (autonomous) subject, then the picture of being that emerges from it is disengaged and unconcerned with accommodating the data of revelation. It is concerned instead with being as that which can or cannot accommodate itself to the structures of cognition.[76] If the basic orientations, then, of early modern philosophy and Suárez's metaphysics are diverse, then one has good reason to suspect that the vision of being that emerges is equally as diverse. That is to say, Suárez's account of being has less to do with thinkability than with what constitutes being as real. To appreciate that claim requires considering some of the dominant interpretations of the Suárezian metaphysics.

3. Interpretive Trends

The relatively recent 400th anniversary of Francisco Suárez's death helped spur renewed interest in the Jesuit thinker within the Anglophone world (and beyond). Between 2011 and 2015, three major, English-language collections devoted to Suárez emerged that considered various aspects of his philosophical and theological thought.[77] With respect to his metaphysics, the volumes published by Cambridge and Oxford manifest the keen interest of analytic metaphysicians who are captivated by what Suárez has to say regarding diverse topics such as *entia rationis* (beings

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[75] Montag, "The False Legacy of Suárez," 54.

[76] On the shift to being understood in terms of cognoscibility within early modernity, see John P. Doyle, *On the Boarders of Being and Knowning: Some Late Scholastic Thoughts on Being and Supertranscendental Being*, ed. Victor M. Salas (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2012).

[77] See Daniel Schwartz, ed., *Interpreting Suárez: Critical Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Benjamin Hill and Henrik Lagerlund, eds. *The Philosophy of Francisco Suárez* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Victor M. Salas and Robert L. Fastiggi, eds., *A Companion to Francisco Suárez* (Leiden: Brill, 2015). To these studies can be added John Doyle's *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez, S.J. (158-1617)*, ed. Victor M. Salas (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010); Marco Sgarbi, ed., *Francisco Suárez and His Legacy: The Impact of Suárezian Metaphysics and Epistemology on Modern Philosophy* (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 2010); and Lukáš Novák, ed., *Suárez's Metaphysics in its Historical and Systematic Context* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014). Doyle's book, however, is a collection of his essays written throughout his career (many in the 1960s) and the latter two volumes are multilingual collections.

of reason),[78] continuous quantity,[79] substantial forms,[80] relations,[81] the transcendentals,[82] and even the cosmological proof for God's existence.[83] The Brill volume further includes treatments of perennial metaphysical topics such as what constitutes the subject matter of metaphysics,[84] the status of universals,[85] and the analogy of being.[86] For the most part, these topics are framed in terms of Suárez's broader conversation with medieval and late Scholastic thought. As is to be expected with such volumes, the reader is presented only with a sampling of important topics that pertain to the Suárezian metaphysics. Unavoidably absent from those collections is a sustained and synthetic treatment of what constitutes the unique character of Suárez's doctrine of being.[87] The present volume intends to fill that lacuna.

Until now, to find a treatment of the Suárezian doctrine of being one had to turn mainly to non-English studies,[88] the conclusions of which are far from unanimous. One of the reasons for the lack of unanimity stems from the fact that his interpreters have located Suárez quite differently within the history of metaphysics. In such historical reconstructions there remain questions regarding whether Suárez was simply an eclectic thinker—even if a "good and healthy one"—as Martin Grabmann suggests;[89] whether he was a 'genuine Thomist'—albeit an "original" one—as José Hellín maintains;[90] or whether he was fundamentally a 'Scotist,' which is basical-

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78 Christopher Shields, "Shadows of Being: Francisco Suárez's *Entia Rationis*," in Benjamin Hill and Henrik Lagerlund, eds., *The Philosophy of Francisco Suárez*, c. 3.

79 Jorge Secada, "Suárez on Continuous Quantity," in Benjamin Hill and Henrik Lagerlund, eds., *The Philosophy of Francisco Suárez*, c. 4.

80 Helen Hattab, "Suárez's Last Stand for the Substantial Form," in Benjamin Hill and Henrik Lagerlund, eds., *The Philosophy of Francisco Suárez*, c. 5; Shields, "The Reality of Substantial Form: Suárez, *Metaphysical Disputation XV*," in, ed., Daniel Schwartz, *Interpreting Suárez*, c. 3.

81 Secada, "Suárez on the Ontology of Relations," in Daniel Schwartz, ed., *Interpreting Suárez*, c. 3.

82 Jorge Gracia and Daniel Novotný, "Fundamentals in Suárez's Metaphysics: Transcendentals and Categories," in Daniel Schwartz, ed., *Interpreting Suárez*, c. 2.

83 Bernie Cantens, "Suárez's Cosmological argument for the existence of God," in Daniel Schwartz, ed., *Interpreting Suárez*, c. 5.

84 Rolf Darge, "Suárez on the Subject of Metaphysics," in Victor M. Salas and Robert L. Fastiggi, eds., *A Companion to Francisco Suárez*, c. 4.

85 Daniel Heider, "Suárez on the Metaphysics and Epistemology of Universals," in Victor M. Salas and Robert L. Fastiggi, eds., *A Companion to Francisco Suárez*, c. 7.

86 Victor M. Salas, "Between Thomism and Scotism: Francisco Suárez on the Analogy of Being," in Victor M. Salas and Robert L. Fastiggi, eds., *A Companion to Francisco Suárez*, c. 14.

87 While a number of essays within the Brill volume do touch upon Suárez's account of being, they do so in passing and as a means of establishing their own proper theses.

88 José Pereira's *Suárez: Between Scholasticism and Modernity* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2007) may be pointed to as an exception to this claim. Much like Doyle's *Collected Studies*, however, Pereira's volume is an amalgamation of articles previously published in diverse venues. Accordingly, the result is neither as synthetic nor as comprehensive as one might desire.

89 Grabmann, "Die 'Disputationes metaphysicae' des Franz Suárez in ihrer methodischen Eigenart und Fortwirkung," in, ed., Karl Six, *P. Franz Suarez S.J.: Gedenkblätter zu seinem dreihundertjährigen Todestag, (25. September 1917)* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia, 1917), 548.

90 Hellín, "Existencialismo Escolastico Suareciano," *Pensamiento* 12 (1956): 157.

ly the perspective of Ludger Honnefelder,[91] Jean-François Courtine,[92] and Olivier Boulnois.[93] As always, the devil is in the details, and, in crafting sweeping historical narratives of medieval metaphysics—to say nothing of Western metaphysics as a whole—one can all too easily gloss over fine details, however decisive and thus important they may be!

Rolf Darge, perhaps more than most, has recognized the complexity and irreducible uniqueness of Suárez's metaphysics. His important 2004 study *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*[94] argues against the idea that Suárez's transcendental conception of metaphysics is fundamentally Scotistic. Following the trajectory of his mentor, Jan Aertsen, Darge seeks to identify the specific character that transcendentality plays for Suárez. As Aertsen has shown, transcendentality is a key organizational principle for medieval metaphysics that intersects virtually all foundational elements of that science.[95] If being is transcendental, as most—if not all—medieval thinkers maintain, then the notion of transcendentality at play will directly affect one's understanding of being itself. Within the history of medieval metaphysics, Duns Scotus represents a decisive "turn" in the medieval view that had previously regarded transcendentality in terms of convertibility.[96] That is, the six traditional transcendentals (being, unity, truth, goodness, thing, and something) were thought to be conceptually distinct, but all really identical with being and thus the same in extension as being. As Scotus sees it, however, the nature of a transcendental is not to group many individuals below it but not to have anything supervenient to it except being itself.[97] Being is thus framed in terms of an absolutely simple and univocal concept that allows one to make the move from 'finite being' to 'infinite being.' Many interpreters have argued that Suárez, because he too accords primacy to the unity of the concept of being, fundamentally proceeds along the same transcendental path as Duns Scotus. Darge maintains, instead, that the notion of transcendentality developed within the Suárezian metaphysics actually unfolds along lines more akin to the pre-Scotistic transcendental tradition

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91 Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens: die formale Bestimmung von Seiendheit und Realität in der Metaphysik des Mittelalters und Neuzeit (Duns Scotus-Suárez-Wolff-Kant-Peirce)* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1990), 200-294. See also idem, *La métaphysique comme science transcendantale: entre le Moyen Âge et les Temps modernes* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2002), 81-89.

92 Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 376.

93 Boulnois, *Être et représentation: une généalogie de la métaphysique moderne à l'époque de Duns Scot (XIIIe-XIVe siècle)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999), 480.

94 Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

95 See, e.g., Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy and the Transcendentals: The Case of Thomas Aquinas* (Leiden: Brill, 1996); idem, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Philosophy: From Philip the Chancellor (ca. 1225) to Francisco Suárez* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

96 Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Philosophy*, c. 9.

97 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 8, pars 1, q. 3, n. 114.

of thinkers such as Thomas Aquinas.[98] Yet, as Darge points out, Suárez is certainly no mere Thomist,[99] which is to say, the Jesuit expresses what he perceives to be the transcendental structure and nature of being in his own unique metaphysical voice. The question is: what specifically constitutes the tenor or nature of that 'voice'?

Darge rightly notes that it was Étienne Gilson who took the first "decisive step" of attempting to answer that question.[100] According to Gilson's reconstruction of the history of medieval metaphysics, Aquinas alone, attuned as he was to the primacy of the *actus essendi*, managed to escape the tendency of essentialistic thinking that consumed Western metaphysics. Most other thinkers seem to be influenced more by Avicenna's essentialistic outlook. In the history of metaphysics, Avicenna stands as one of the pivotal thinkers who highlights the non-existential character of an essence taken just as it is in itself (*secundum se*). With *equinitas* (horseness) as his example, Avicenna argues that the existence of an individual horse, as well as horseness that exists in the mind as a universal, is entirely accidental to *equinitas* taken just as it is in itself, for, in the end, *"Equinitas est tantum equinitas."*[101] As Gilson sees it, "Duns Scotus has not radically altered the Avicennian notion of being. His own horse is still the same as that of Avicenna; only it has been broken in."[102] What is more, insofar as the metaphysical perspective of the Subtle Doctor is decisive for Suárez, the essentialistic determination of being that Avicenna put in place would persist well into the sixteenth century (and beyond) thanks to the *Disputationes metaphysicae*. Gilson thinks that, much like Avicenna and Scotus, Suárez "has become responsible for the spreading of a metaphysics of essences which makes profession of disregarding existences as irrelevant to its own project."[103]

Furthermore, in Gilson's view, Suárez stands as a liminal figure who transmits the essentialistic metaphysics of the Middle Ages to early modernity, thereby laying the foundations for what would become the rationalist ontology of early modernity. "And all this owing to Avicenna, who begot Scotus, who begot Suarez… And then Suarez begot Wolff."[104] With Christian Wolff one arrives at scholasticism's last stand, as it were. Already the currents of modern philosophy had gradually eroded the ramparts of medieval metaphysics, which was, to Wolff's mind, virtually synonymous with "Suárez of the Society of Jesus, who among all the Scholastics has

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98 Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 179, 394; idem, "Suárez and Medieval Transcendental Thought," in, ed. Victor M. Salas, Hircocervi *and Other Metaphysical Wonders: Essays in Honor of John P. Doyle* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2013), 83-84.

99 Ibid., 394-405.

100 Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 11.

101 Avicenna Latinus, *Liber de philosophia prima sive scientia divina*, tr. 5, c. 1.

102 Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 89-90.

103 Ibid, 105.

104 Ibid., 106, 112.

meditated more profoundly upon metaphysical matters."[105] If Suárez represented the epitome of scholastic thought and if, for Kant, Wolff himself was the "greatest among all dogmatic philosophers,"[106] then the relationship between Suárez and the fate of metaphysics at the hands of transcendental idealism was inevitable.

Gilson's influence on subsequent historians of medieval philosophy, especially regarding their assessment of Suárez's metaphysics, cannot be overestimated. John P. Doyle, a student of Gilson in Toronto and one of North America's most important scholars of Jesuit scholastic metaphysics, in general, and Suárez, in particular, lifts high the Gilsonian banner when he exposes every aspect of essentialism latent within the Jesuit's metaphysics. For Doyle, Suárez's doctrine of being ultimately consists in being's freedom from self-contradiction. Congruous with Gilson's accusation of essentialism is the noematic reduction of being to what can be thought or conceived. Here, Doyle is in fundamental agreement with another teacher of his, Norman Wells, who draws attention to the near proximity of the Suárezian metaphysics to 'mentalism.'[107] More than what exists, being, according to the mentalist perspective, is whatever can be thought. The limit of thought, moreover, is just freedom from self-contradiction. Excluded from such an account is the centrality of existence to being. In fact, with Heidegger's accusation of *Seinsvergessenheit* in mind, Doyle goes so far as to identify a certain "nihilistic" attitude in Suárez's metaphysics insofar as it excludes existence. "As regards Heidegger's criticism, therefore, we believe that he has rightly discerned the limits and the direction of Suarezian metaphysics and that there is basis for his charge of 'nihilism' against it."[108]

Like Gilson, Doyle thinks there is an historical implication to Suárez's metaphysical teaching. Shifting metaphysics's concern away from existence towards conceivability places into motion the gradual transition of metaphysics from a transcendental science in the above-described sense to a supertranscendental science that treats not only real beings but also beings of reason and impossible objects. In that regard, Suárez's influence upon Protestant scholastics, such as Johannes Clauberg and Clemens Timpler, who construe metaphysics in terms of a cognoscibility broad enough to embrace the real and the ideal, is evident.[109] Dearer to Suárez,

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[105] Wolff, *Ontologia sive prima philosophia* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1736), pars I, sec. 2, c. 3, § 169: "Sane Franciscus Suarez e Societate Jesu, quem inter Scholasticos res metaphysicas profundius meditatum…."

[106] Kant, *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft* (Hamburg and Leipzig: Leopold Voss, 1889), Bxxxvi-xxxvii: "… des größten unter allen dogmatischen Philosophen…."

[107] Wells, "*Esse Cognitum* and Suárez Revisited," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 67 (1993): 339-48. Cf. Jorge Gracia, "Suárez's Conception of Metaphysics: A Step in the direction of Mentalism?" *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 65 (1991): 287-230; idem, "Suárez and Metaphysical Mentalism: The Last Visit," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 67 (1993): 349-354.

[108] Doyle, "Heidegger and Scholastic Metaphysics," reprinted in *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548-1617)*, ed. Victor M. Salas (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010), 97.

[109] Clauberg, *Metaphysica de ente, Ontosophia* (Amsterdam, 1664), I.5, II.8-11; Timpler, *Metaphysicae systema methodicum* (Hannover, 1616), metaphysicae lib. 1, c. 1, problema 5.

however, are his own order-brothers, such as Antonio Berlando de Quiros,[110] Maximilian Wietrowski,[111] and Sylvester Mauro,[112] who themselves dwell at length on supertranscendentality. Doyle not only validates Gilson's assessment of Suárez's metaphysical influence upon early modernity, but he also shows how the Jesuit's thought impacted the history of metaphysics beyond what one finds detailed in the writings of the canonical figures of early modernity.

Doyle's conclusions regarding the movement of late scholastic metaphysics towards supertranscendentality converge with the work of Jean-François Courtine. Courtine is in basic agreement with Gilson and Doyle in their opinion that Suárez transmitted to modernity an account of being in which existence had been displaced by thinkability.[113] Such a displacement is particularly evident, he thinks, in Suárez's identification of *ens* ('being') with *res* ('thing'). Here, once again, we seem to find the undeniable influence of (the Latin) Avicenna and the metaphysical tradition he begot (including Henry of Ghent and Scotus), in which *res* was resolved in terms of *reor*, *reris* ('I think,' 'you think'). Whereas *ens* derives from something's existing (*esse*), *res* is a broader term that embraces both the existent and the non-existent (i.e., beings of reason). Courtine argues that "*res* necessarily becomes, in Suarezian posterity, less *thing* and more *something*, *aliquid*, *etwas*, of such sort that one can consider it as the premier supertranscendental term."[114] It is no surprise, then, that within modern ontology, "*cognoscibility* becomes the ultimate criterion of all being."[115]

Courtine's interpretation of Suárez has itself become influential for many others, both those working within the history of metaphysics (e.g., Boulnois and Víctor Sanz) as well as those, such as John Milbank, who appeal to pre-modern metaphysics as a means of engaging postmodern theological discourse. Though Milbank does not dwell at length upon the Suárezian conception of being, he cites with approval Courtine's interpretation of Suárez that metaphysics is "a science of what constitutes 'being' taken as a possible object of knowledge which is *unproblematically comprehensible*."[116] What is more, though Milbank challenges Jean-Luc Marion's supplanting the notion of being with the phenomenological concept of donation, he is in agreement with Marion's critique of early modernity's ontological framework as conceptually idolatrous. Marion locates the decline of early modernity as far

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[110] See Antonio Bernaldo de Quiros, *Opus philosophicum* (Lyon, 1666), tr. 2, pars 1 de prooem. Log., d. 10, s. 8.

[111] See Maximilian Wietrowski, *Philosophia disputata* (Prague, 1697), Pars I, Ex Logica, 13, c. 2, § 1, n. 251.

[112] See Sylvester Mauro, *Opus theologicum in tres tomos distributum* (Rome, 1687), t. I, l. 2, q. 58, n. 41.

[113] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 376-93.

[114] Ibid., 537: "… la *res* devient nécessairement dans la postérité suarézienne, moins la *chose* que le *quelque chose*, *aliquid*, *etwas*, de telle sorte qu'on puisse la considérer comme le premier terme sur-transcendant…."

[115] Ibid., 535: "… la *cognoscibilité* qui devient le critère ultime de toute étantité."

[116] Milbank, *The Word Made Strange*, 40-41 (emphases in original).

back as Duns Scotus, whose commitment to univocity is appropriated by Suárez, so it is claimed, with disastrous consequences for theology.[117] Milbank presents a similar genealogical reconstruction of modern ontology wherein Suárez brings more fully to completion what had already been initiated centuries earlier by Scotus, who "inaugurated a metaphysics independent of theology."[118] This inauguration amounted to the "commencement of the decline of metaphysics, in the opening to an autonomous, secular sphere of knowledge."[119] The radical uniqueness and metaphysical irreducibility of God are transgressed, and the transcendent creator is forced to accommodate the (idolatrous) concept of being, which, as Marion argues, places conditions upon the manner in which the divine self-disclosure can take place.[120] In short, God becomes just one more being among others. The ineffability of God is rendered comprehensible to a mode (viz., 'infinite') that, as Marion holds, is entirely extrinsic to the concept of being.[121] The theological projects that had formed the horizon upon which someone such as Thomas Aquinas had conducted his metaphysics are overcome by a "pure philosophy"[122] that is coordinated with an autonomous form of rationality from which all theological commitments are banished. Far from serving as the *ancilla theologiae*, metaphysics displaces its mistress and acquires a new identity as a secularized *magister* of its own.

4. The Thesis and Structure of the Present Work

My aim within this volume is not so much to adjudicate Suárez's place in the history of philosophy; Darge's aforementioned text already does a masterful job of that. Rather, I seek to reconstruct an account of Suárez's doctrine of being in terms of his own metaphysical determinations and in fidelity to the claims that he actually makes throughout his texts. More than anything, I intend to allow Suárez to speak in his own voice and according to his own terms regarding the character of being. I argue that the doctrine of being he develops, contrary to the interpretations referenced above, is not essentialistic, a matter of logical possibility, or reducible to the set of conditions requisite for thinkability or representation. Rather, I defend the thesis that the Suárezian doctrine of being is fundamentally constituted in terms of existence (*esse*).

In arguing that Suárez's doctrine of being is existential, do I not simply embrace Gilson's premises and those whom he has influenced? If one accepts those premises, then surely one is determined to infer the same conclusions as Gilson or at least

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[117] Marion, *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes: analogie, création des vérités éternelles et fondement* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1991), 95.

[118] Milbank, *The Word Made Strange*, 45.

[119] Ibid., 44.

[120] Marion, *God without Being*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991), xxii, 34, 35, 47.

[121] Marion, *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes*, 101-102.

[122] Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 97.

allow Gilson to set the parameters of the discussion. In other words, is it not the case that the categories used to approach medieval metaphysics (i.e., existentialism vs. essentialism) are inadequate and that retaining their use only leads to further confusion rather than clarity? Here, I would point out that it is one thing to accept an interpreter's premises and another entirely to operate from a shared conceptual framework. While the term 'existential' may have been *au courant* when Gilson appropriated it from the avant-garde existentialist philosophers of the twentieth century, it—together with its maligned counterpart 'essentialism'—has more than a mere rhetorical value. We must recall that medieval thinkers themselves also identified the dynamics between essence and existence, although admittedly from a set of concerns different to those of twentieth-century thinkers. While there was wide-ranging disagreement among medieval philosophers regarding the nature of the relation or distinction between essence and existence, they developed their theses relative to a common conceptual framework. It is precisely that framework that Suárez takes as his point of departure. Does 'existential' when applied to Thomas's metaphysics and that of Suárez mean the same thing? In light of the fact that they operate with different doctrines of being, how can it? Nevertheless, that does not render the term 'existential' meaningless or inadequate when applied to someone such as Suárez. What is required is to show how he understands existence as well as how it functions in his account of being, which is what this volume intends to provide.

The validity of my existential reading can be seen from the fact that Suárez considers something a *real* being insofar as it is "apt to be or really to exist."[123] While it is true that he also understands 'real being' as that which has a 'real essence,' Suárez nevertheless holds that a 'real essence' is 'real,' not insofar as it satisfies the logical demands of thinkability in avoiding self-contradiction, but insofar as it has an 'aptitude' to exist. If existence itself constitutes being as 'real,' then one cannot adequately portray being simply in terms of the logically possible. Similarly, one cannot reduce being to the cognoscible, since that which lacks existence is not directly or per se intelligible. As Suárez himself says—and what often seems to be neglected among those who construe his metaphysics as essentialistic—"What a real essence or quiddity is cannot be understood without an order to existence [*esse*] and real actual entity."[124] Existence is not only the condition of being, but the condition for cognoscibility itself. "For we cannot otherwise conceive of some essence, which does not exist, to be real unless it is such that it is not repugnant to it to be an actual entity, which it has through actual existence."[125] Yet, it is this

[123] *DM* 2.4.7.

[124] Ibid., 2.4.14 (vol. 25, 92): "Quod vero essentia aut quidditas realis sit, intelligi non potest sine ordine ad esse et realem entitatem actualem…."

[125] Ibid. (vol. 25, 92): "… non enim aliter concipimus essentiam aliquam, quae actu non existit, esse realem, nisi quia talis est, ut ei non repugnet esse entitatem acutalem, quod habet per actualem existentiam…."

existential reference that many interpreters overlook when they reduce Suárez's account of being to what can be "thought without contradiction." Were being reduced simply to freedom from self-contradiction, there would be very little difference between logic and metaphysics. Indeed, this is precisely why many accuse Suárez's metaphysics of being nothing more than an onto-*logic*. If the difference between being and non-being is decided by nothing more than contradiction, then the distinction between what is real and what is merely possible (i.e., that which is also free from self-contradiction) would seem to vanish. As Kant famously remarked, "One hundred real Thalers do not contain the least bit more than one hundred possible ones."[126] Notwithstanding the a priori cognitive structures of transcendental idealism that serve as the backdrop to Kant's project, the philosopher from Königsberg and Suárez both agree that existence is not derived from conceptual analysis of non-contradictory essential predicates but is encountered in the presence of an actually existing being. Before Kant, Christian Wolff held that "possibility does not determine existence… possibility is not the sufficient reason for existence, on the contrary, thus far from the fact that something possible is recognized a priori, it is not yet understood why it exists."[127] Similarly, Suárez's own order-brother, Rodrigo de Arriaga, states, "possibility is not explained through the negation of contradictories *independently from existence*, but through that existence supposed, as by a condition."[128] One should be wary, then, about concluding that Suárez reduces being to freedom from contradiction, which is just to reduce it to logical possibility.

Many metaphysical implications emerge from being's existential structure. Being must be understood as real, transcendental, and analogical. I make clear that these aspects of being are interrelated and inter-determining. Real being is not restricted to a particular category or mode, but, for Suárez, involves all "transcendental and analogical characters, such as accidents, forms, and the like, as well as the differences of being."[129] Real beings' agreement in existing or in being (*in essendo*), moreover, serves as the basis for their transcendental community. Important for Suárez is the fact that being transcends all determinate structures, though in such a way that it is contained within them. Suárez characterizes such transcendence in terms of 'immanence.' Since being is 'immanently transcendent,' the transcendental community of being enjoys diverse degrees of reality structured in terms

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[126] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A599/B627: "Hundert wirkliche Taler enthalten nicht das Mindeste mehr, als hundert möglische."

[127] Wolff, *Philosophia prima, sive ontologia* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1736: 141-42), pars 1, sec. 2, c. 3, § 172: "*… possibilitate existentiam non determinari… possibilitatem non esse rationem sufficientem existentiae*, atque adeo ex eo, quod aliquid possibile a priori agnoscatur, nondum intelligi, cur existat" (emphases in original).

[128] Arriaga, *Cursus philosophicus*, Metaph., disp. 2, sec. 1, subsec. 2, n. 22 (Lyon, 1669: 960): "… possibilitas non est explicanda per negationem contradictionem independenter ab existentia, sed per illam supposita existentia, ut conditione."

[129] *DM* 1.1.20.

of unequal relations of priority and posteriority. Hence, Suárez, in opposition to Scotus, defends analogy.

The analogical character of the Suárezian doctrine of being is often misconstrued and misrepresented. Many interpreters (e.g., Ludger Honnefelder, Walter Hoeres, and Courtine) hold that Suárez maintains the same transcendental theory as Duns Scotus, in which being is regarded as a 'simply simple concept,' the irreducible unity of which consists in univocity. As a result, they hold that, despite his explicit claim to the contrary, Suárez's account of being is, at best, univocal, at worst, simply incoherent. Such readings seriously misinterpret Suárez's doctrine. Given that Suárez operates with a radically different transcendental vision than Duns Scotus, he is entirely consistent when he argues that being is analogical.

The present volume will represent one of the few sustained efforts aimed at examining the Suárezian metaphysical doctrine of being according to its own doctrinal exigencies and terminology. Since Suárez defends his theses after exhaustively surveying broader metaphysical debates involving numerous medieval and late scholastic thinkers, who oftentimes serve as foils to his project, historical considerations of medieval metaphysics are necessary. My hope, then, is that this book will do justice to Suárez's singular thought, while keeping that thought historically contextualized.

In the succeeding chapters, I develop my argument as follows. Chapter One considers the subject matter of metaphysics. Already in his initial metaphysical determinations, Suárez identifies the subject matter of metaphysics in such a way that being is revealed as real (i.e., that which is apt to exist), transcendental, and analogical. Suárez's fundamental claim is that the *objectum adæquatum* of metaphysics is "being insofar as it is real being" (*ens in quantum ens reale*), but the question naturally arises: what does the qualification 'real' mean? Being (*ens*) is 'real' precisely because it is ordered to existence (*esse*). This existential reference has various implications. First, metaphysics excludes from its considerations those things that cannot exist, such as beings of reason (*entia rationis*). Hence, one cannot so easily portray Suárez as adumbrating a supertranscendental metaphysics in which both real being and beings of reason are included under the rubric of thinkability. He remains committed to the claim that existence, not thinkability, is the criterion of being. Second, if existence is that in which all beings agree, then existence is that in virtue of which being is transcendent. Existence fundamentally constitutes the metaphysical structure of all beings, whether infinite or finite, substance or accident. Thus, it functions as the basis for beings' metaphysical (analogical) community. Third, the analogical character of being serves to secure the unity and to determine the scope of the adequate object of metaphysics.

Chapter Two further explores Suárez's understanding of the nature of real being, which he frames according to two important, scholastic distinctions, namely, the distinction between 'objective and formal concepts,' on the one hand, and the dis-

tinction between 'nominal and participial being,' on the other. Despite structuring his argument in terms of 'concepts,' his metaphysical project remains committed to an investigation of extra-mental (real) existents. Of particular concern is the nature of the objective concept of being. While some interpreters, such as Timothy Cronin and, to a certain extent, Norman Wells locate the objective concept on the side of the knower, others, such as Gracia, argue that the objective concept of being retains a realist foundation. I support and defend the latter, realist interpretation.

With respect to the second distinction, though Suárez narrows metaphysics's focus to nominal being—to that which has a 'real essence' which 'prescinds from existence'—he nevertheless fundamentally understands being (*ens*) in terms of existence. From the Suárezian perspective, 'precision,' it is important to point out, does not amount to exclusion. To establish that point, I consider how Suárez develops the medieval notion of '*res*,' in order to specify the adequate object of metaphysics: real being. Some scholars, such as Courtine and Boulnois, have argued that in identifying being with *res*, Suárez construes being as that which is 'thinkable.' They argue that *res*, as we find in the tradition reaching back to the Latin Avicenna and encompassing Henry of Ghent as well as Duns Scotus, excludes any existential connotation. As such, *res*, which derives from the Latin verb '*reri*' ('to think'), can extend to both what exists (real beings) as well as that which does not exist (fictions or beings of reason). Although Suárez identifies being and *res*, I argue that this does not mean that being is portrayed as the thinkable. While some medieval thinkers do construe *res* without regard to existence, Suárez himself takes a markedly different approach. He identifies the two terms in such a way that *res* is resolved into being (*ens*), for *res* connotes a relation to existence (*esse*). The chapter concludes with a consideration of how Suárez's existential determination of being sets the stage for his account of transcendentality.

Chapter Three explores the implications of the Suárezian conception of being in terms of its intrinsic transcendental character. His transcendental doctrine has provided the occasion for several interpreters to make one of three claims: (1) Suárez's transcendental doctrine is identical to Scotus's transcendental theory; (2) Suárez's transcendental doctrine has less to do with the intrinsic character of being than with the various ways in which we conceive something, which, as Jorge Gracia argues, amounts to a form of mentalism; (3) Suárez's understanding of transcendentality itself, in which 'thing' (*res*) and 'something' (*aliquid*) are reduced to 'being' (*ens*), eliminates existence from metaphysics. Whereas Chapter Two already showed how being retains an existential character even though it is identical to *res*, this chapter develops Suárez's thinking further from the perspective of the transcendental status of *res* and *aliquid*, which, together with *ens*, *unum*, *verum*, and *bonum*, are numbered among the six traditional transcendentals of the Middle Ages.

The chapter begins with a discussion of a problem that encumbers any transcendental science in which being is really identical with each of its transcenden-

tal attributes. Insofar as a science aims to demonstrate properties of its subject, those properties, according to Aristotle, must be distinct from that subject. For Scotus, this demand is not difficult to accommodate since, as he sees it, being is not contained within its differences and modes. Suárez's conception of immanent transcendence, however, commits him to the claim that being is contained within its differences and transcendental attributes. Hence, he must retool the notion of what is requisite for a science. To that end, a rational distinction between a subject and its properties will suffice. If it is the case that being is intrinsic to its attributes, then it remains the case that his transcendental metaphysics is structured upon the real and not, as Gracia contends, the thinkable or, as Jorge Uscatescu Barron maintains, mere beings of reason. Further, the elimination of *res* and *aliquid* as distinct transcendentals remains consistent with Suárez's existential portrayal of being since both terms are cast, not in terms of the thinkable or possible, but with respect to the intrinsic entitative perfection of being that has its root in existence.

Chapter Four explores Suárez's thought regarding the nature of possible being. As Schmutz remarks, the medieval analysis regarding possibility was motivated by two theological problems: (1) fidelity to the notion of a creation *ex nihilo* and (2) affirming that God knows all things, even those that He has not brought into being and only remain possible.[130] Suárez is no exception to this twofold challenge. The preceding chapters showed that Suárez resolves being and its transcendental attributes in terms of existence. This claim implies that if being is ordered to existence, then what does not exist is non-being, that is to say, nothing. Those interpreters who reduce the Suárezian doctrine of being to what is merely possible, argue that existence is irrelevant and that real essences have a non-existential *reality* unto themselves. Such a claim is problematic for Suárez's theological commitment to a creation *ex nihilo*. If God bestows existence upon possible essences, then God has not so much created out of nothing as out of something: possibility. The Jesuit's commitment to *futuribilia* (future contingents), which played such an important role in arguments over middle knowledge within the sixteenth century, would also seem to jeopardize any commitment to a creation *ex nihilo*. Further, there are authors, such as John Doyle, who argue that even if, *per impossibile*, there were no God, *possibilia* and eternal truths would still retain a non-existential reality.[131]

Such interpretations are erroneous because, according to Suárez's lights, possibility has no intrinsic reality unto itself but is entirely a matter of extrinsic denomination in relationship to the power of God. Needless to say, this response only pushes the issue back a step: what makes something possible, even for God? This is a question not only for Suárez, but for any number of medieval theologians who attempted to reconcile their commitment to a creation *ex nihilo* with divine om-

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130 Schmutz, "Réalistes, nihilists et incompatibilistes: Le débat sur les *negative truthmakers* dans la scolastique jésuite espagnole," *Cahiers de Philosophie de l'Université de Caen* 43 (2007): 133.

131 Doyle, *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548-1617)*, c. 2.

nipotence. Not all of those accounts are satisfactory, as Suárez himself points out. Hence, he charts a median position between those, such as Thomas Aquinas, who regard possibility as a function of imitation of the divine essence and others, such as Scotus, who regard possibility as a function of divine cognition. In developing his account of possibility, Suárez highlights an important distinction that has not been adequately recognized in the literature, namely, the difference between the ontological status of possibility and its modal character. While the modal character of possibility might not fall within the scope of divine power, any entitative status of possibility does. Thus, for Suárez, there is no coeternal (possible) reality existing alongside God that compromises the notion of a creation *ex nihilo*.

The fifth and final chapter argues that scholarly treatments regarding Suárezian analogy typically operate with a set of presuppositions alien to the Jesuit's own metaphysics. In particular, some, such as Walter Hoeres and Jean-Luc Marion, think that Suárez's defense of an absolutely unified objective concept of being commits him to a thinly disguised form of univocity. In essence, he is no different from Scotus in that regard. Olivier Boulnois also ascribes the view that being is "univocally in all objects," not only to early modern representationalist metaphysics but also to Suárez. When, however, Suárez explicitly rejects univocity in favor of analogy, many interpreters argue that his doctrine is simply incoherent. Such assertions of univocity are not grounded in the Suárezian texts. The analogical character of Suárez's doctrine of being can only fully be appreciated in light of his understanding of immanent transcendence. Since God exists *a se* and creatures exist *ab alio*, being, argues Suárez, pertains first and *per essentiam* to God and derivatively to creatures *per participationem*.

As such, being is neither a vicious abstraction nor a concept indifferent to its realization in particular kinds of being. Since being, of itself, descends unequally to its *inferiora*, it cannot be reduced to a sterile concept that satisfies the univocal conditions of what can be thought. I show that the Suárezian doctrine of analogy emerges as a consequence of his previous metaphysical theses and shares the uniqueness of those theses. His doctrine charts a path between the Scotistic account of univocity, on the one hand, and, on the other, the Thomistic preference for an analogy of proper proportionality.

Throughout this volume, my hope is that a clearer understanding of the Suárezian doctrine of being will emerge, one that corrects many scholarly misperceptions and allows Suárez to be recognized as the original and coherent metaphysician that he is.

Chapter One

Metaphysics and Its Object

In the present chapter I consider how Suárez initiates and establishes the parameters of his metaphysical project. When answering the question 'what constitutes the adequate object of metaphysics,' he thereby discloses something about what being itself is. By "adequate object," Suárez simply means that "material concerning which this [metaphysical] doctrine turns upon."[1] I argue that his answer to this question regarding the object of metaphysics reveals a doctrine of being that is fundamentally realist, existential, transcendental, and analogical. The chapters that follow show in greater detail how these four attributes are interrelated and build off one another, but a quick sketch of their interrelation will help frame the discussion that follows.

Regarding my first claim that Suárez's metaphysics is 'realist,' I do not mean 'realist' in the sense of that which is opposed to, on the one hand, idealism or, on the other, nominalism.[2] Rather, my claim has its setting within the broader context of Aristotle's metaphysics wherein the Stagirite marks a number of distinctions regarding the meaning of 'being' (τὸ ὄν). Being can be said in terms of 'accidental being' (τὸ ὄν κατὰ συμβεβηκός), 'being as true' (τὸ ὄν ὡς ἀληθές), and 'being as being' (τὸ ὄν ᾗ ὄν).[3] When identifying the scope of metaphysics, Aristotle excludes both 'being as true' and 'accidental being' and restricts first philosophy (i.e., metaphysics)

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[1] Cf. *DM* 1.proem. (vol. 25, 2): "Haec autem universa nomina ex objecto, seu materia circa quam haec doctrina versatur…." By 'material' Suárez does not mean matter in the Aristotelian sense of ὕλη or potentiality, but, rather, the 'subject matter' of a science, which the Jesuit takes to be synonymous with 'adequate object.' Cf. ibid. (vol. 25, 2): "… primum omnium inquirendum nobis est hujus doctrinae objectum, seu subjectum, quo cognito, constabit facile quae sint hujus scientiae munera…." Cf. ibid., 1.1.28 (vol. 25, 11): "… ergo illud est adaequatum objectum hujus scientiae, quia illud est subjectum scientiae…"; ibid., 2.proem (vol. 25, 64): "His suppositis, quae de objecto seu subjecto hujus scientiae tradidimus…." Writing after Suárez, Pedro Hurtado de Mendoza, though not mentioning Suárez by name, complains about theologians and philosophers who have been 'lax' in conflating *objectum* with *subjectum*, which the later Jesuit thinks should remain distinct. See Hurtado, *Universa philosophia*, Metaph., d. 1, s. 1, n. 1 (ed. Lyon, 1624: 693): disp. 1, sec. 1, n. 1 (1624: 693): "… laxe autem accipiuntur a Philosophis & Theologis; saepe non discriminantibus subiectum ab obiecto…." Here, Hurtado seems to be following Ockham's lead, who makes a distinction between the two. I suggest, however, that the reason for this distinction as found within Ockham and Hurtado stems from their nominalist sensibilities. Limitations in space prohibit me from developing this thesis further.

[2] That said, I do believe this metaphysical doctrine stands in opposition to both. For an excellent treatment of Suárez's realism, see Daniel Heider, *Universals in Second Scholasticism: A Comparative Study with Focus on the Theories of Francisco Suárez S.J. (1548–1617), João Poinsot O.P. (1589–1644) and Bartolomeo Mastri da Meldola O.F.M. Conv. (1602–1673)/Bonaventura Belluto O.F.M. Conv. (1600–1676)* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 2014). For the fundamental difference between Suárez's metaphysics and the idealism of early modern rationalism, see José Pereira's *Suárez: Between Scholasticism and Modernity* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2007), esp. c. 5.

[3] Aristotle *Metaphysics* 6.2.1026a33-1026b2. I should note that Aristotle additionally identifies being in terms of potency and act.

to the study of 'τὸ ὂν ᾗ ὂν.' As John P. Doyle remarks, whatever "this formula [viz., τὸ ὂν ᾗ ὂν] meant for the Aristotle and whatever its vicissitudes in antiquity as well as in the Middle Ages, for Suárez it was qualified as 'being insofar as it is real being.'"[4] That is, being as restricted to the domain of what *really* exists, as opposed to thought objects or arbitrarily unified conglomerations of distinct entities (i.e., *ens per accidens*). Medieval and late scholastic authors, Suárez included, were, by and large, content to follow Aristotle and restricted metaphysics to the investigation of being insofar as it is real.[5] Much of Doyle's work has also shown that a shift occurs within the seventeenth century wherein many scholastics, such as Hurtado de Mendoza, restructured metaphysics so that its proper (partial) object includes beings of reason (*entia rationis*) as well as, in some cases, being *per accidens*.[6] Depending upon the particular author's conception of the nature of *ens rationis*, there was, as a result of the inclusion of *ens rationis*, an incorporation of 'being as true' into the scope of metaphysics.[7] This expansion of the scope of metaphysics so as to include *entia rationis* pushed first philosophy in the direction of a supertranscendental science. Given that the only common factor between real being and beings of reason is that both are thinkable, being was often framed in terms of the cognoscible rather than what actually exists *in rerum natura*. Jean-François Courtine has argued that Suárez himself set the stage for such a supertranscendental shift insofar as he develops an account of being that is entirely indifferent to existence.[8] Nevertheless, as we shall see, this seventeenth-century, supertranscendental trend stands in direct contrast to Suárez's own metaphysical doctrine.

My second claim—that Suárez's metaphysics is 'existential'—is an explanation of and reason for my first claim. In establishing that the *objectum adæquatum*[9] of

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[4] Doyle, "Extrinsic Cognoscibility," in *On the Borders of Being and Knowing: Some Late Scholastic Thoughts on Supertranscendental Being*, ed., Victor M. Salas (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2012), 67-68.

[5] See, e.g., Thomas Aquinas, *De ente et essentia*, c. 1 where he marks the distinction between being (*ens*) as "*dividitur per decem genera*" and as "*quod significat propositionum veritatem*." He rejects the latter and focuses his metaphysical attention upon the former. John P. Doyle has traced the gradual collapse of this distinction in later Jesuit scholastic metaphysics, which corresponds to the uprising of supertranscendental theories. See his *On the Borders of Being and Knowing: Some Late Scholastic Thoughts on Supertranscendental Being*, ed. Victor M. Salas (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2012).

[6] See Doyle, *On the Borders of Being and Knowing*. Cf. Hurtado de Mendoza, *Universa philosophia*, Metaph., disp. 1, sec. 2, ss. 1, n. 51 (ed. Lyon, 1624: 701): "Ens rationis ut sic abstractum ab ente rationis concernente omnem materiam, est objectum partiale proprium Metaphysicae; sive continetur in Metaphysicae objecto communissimo." Ibid., Metaph., d. 1, s. 2, ss.4 n. 48 (ed. Lyon, 1624: 704): "Ens per accidens ut sic est pars obiecti communissimi Metaphysicae."

[7] John P. Doyle has treated both the various manners in which *entia rationis* have been considered either in terms of *ens per accidens* or being as true. With respect to the latter, he has also shown its gradual integration into Jesuit scholastic metaphysics. See Doyle, *On the Borders of Being and Knowing*.

[8] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1990), 525.

[9] It is evident that, according to Suárez, there is an identity between the subject and object of a science. See *DM* 1.prooem. (vol. 25, 2): "… primum omnium inquirendum nobis est hujus doctrinae

metaphysics is "being insofar as it is real being" (*ens in quantum ens reale* = EER),[10] the question arises: in virtue of what is being 'real being'? For Suárez, being (*ens*) is 'real being' precisely because it is ordered to existence (*esse*).[11] While I address the full structure of this existential reference in the next chapter, intimations of it can already be discerned in Suárez's argument for what constitutes the adequate object of metaphysics.

My third claim, which pertains to the transcendentality of Suárez's metaphysics, also emerges from its existential character. It is because all beings (*entia*) agree in the universal or most common character of existing that a metaphysical community of similitude is formed.[12] "All real beings truly have some similitude and agreement in the character of being [*in ratione essendi*]."[13] But, if being is that in which *all* beings agree, then being is truly transcendent, for it is not localized to a particular being or category but functions as a means whereby all individual beings are united in a metaphysical (analogical) community.[14] The kind of transcendence at stake for Suárez is not a "vicious abstraction" that yields a concept "maximally extensive and minimally intensive," as is the case for Duns Scotus's univocal concept of being.[15]

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objcetum, seu subjectum, quo cognito, constabit facile quae sint hujus sapientiae munera, quae necessitas vel utilitas, et quanta dignitas."

[10] *DM* 1.1.26 (vol. 25, 11): "Dicendum est ergo, ens in quantum ens reale esse objectum adaequatum hujus scientiae."

[11] See, e.g., *DM* 2.4.14 (vol. 25, 92): "Quod vero essentia aut quidditas realis sit, intelligi non potest sine *ordine ad esse* et realem entitatem actualem…" (emphases mine).

[12] *DM* 2.1.9 (vol. 25, 68): "… nam ens vel est idem quod existens, vel, si sumatur ut aptitudine existens, conceptus ejus habet eamdem rationem unitatis. Hinc etiam conceptus entis, non solum unus, sed etiam simplicissimus…."

[13] Ibid., 2.2.14 (vol. 25, 74): "… omnia entia realia vere habent aliquam similitudinem et convenientiam in ratione essendi…." Cf. ibid. (vol. 25, 75): "Item illa convenientia fundatur in actu essendi…."

[14] Ibid., 2.2.8 (vol. 25, 72): "Dico ergo primo, conceptui formali entis respondere unum conceptum objectivum adaequatum, et immediatum, qui expresse non dicit substantiam, neque accidens, neque Deum, nec creaturam, sed haec omnia per modum unius, scilicet quatenus sunt inter se aliqo modo similia, et conveniunt in essendo." To say that all 'beings' (*entia*) agree in 'being' (*esse*), might sound hopelessly vague. Certainly, the infinitive '*esse*', just as much as '*ens*,' can be properly rendered as 'being,' but there remain important distinctions between the two. As Suárez himself points out, the term '*ens*' (being) is derived from the verb '*sum*' just as its participle. Further, '*sum*' itself signifies the 'act of existence' (*actus essendi*) or existing (*existens*). Indeed, Suárez states "for being and existence are the same/esse enim et existere idem sunt" (*DM* 2.4.1; vol. 25, 88). See also *DM* 2.4.2. My claim, then, is that there is an underlying existential reference operating within Suárez's account of being. I shall expand upon these considerations in greater detail in the immediately following chapter.

[15] Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus on God* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 256. See Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 8, pars 1, q. 3, nn. 137-50, wherein Scotus clearly establishes that there is no common nature shared between God and creatures. Rolf Darge importantly points out that the Suárezian *conceptus entis objectivus* cannot be identified with the Scotistic *conceptus simpliciter simplex* without doing violence to the former. The reason for that, as he argues, stems from the divergent transcendental theories that each author utilizes. See Darge, "Suárez and Medieval Transcendental Thought," in, ed. Victor M. Salas, Hircocervi *and Other Metaphysical Wonders: Essays in Honor of John P. Doyle* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2013), 65-93.

Rather, the transcendental character of being consists in its immanent containment within all beings, including the very differences and modes thereof.[16]

Finally, the analogical character of being determines the scope and unity of the adequate object of metaphysics. Though there is a diversity of beings, that diversity is overcome by a fundamental analogical unity that holds the totality of being together. While Suárez extends that analogical community to include even beings of reason, important qualifications are needed in order to appreciate the scope of metaphysics. The analogical community between real being and beings of reason consists in an extrinsic analogy of proper proportionality. Suárez dismisses such an analogy, however, from the purview of metaphysics and focuses instead on an intrinsic analogy of attribution. An intrinsic analogy of attribution corresponds to the transcendental structure of real being wherein being is realized according to various degrees of priority (God/substance) and posteriority (creature/accident). Beings of reason, however, since they are not real—which is to say, they lack an existential aptitude—are excluded from an intrinsic analogy of attribution and thereby from metaphysics itself.

These four features of the Suárezian doctrine of being, as we shall see, arise from the Jesuit's efforts to maintain a dynamic balance between the Aristotelian requirements for a science, on the one hand, and, on the other, his theological commitments. Yet, despite Suárez's relatively straightforward presentation of his metaphysical doctrine, there remains, as noted in the introduction, considerable scholarly debate concerning what he actually espouses. For instance, though Suárez is clear that the *objectum adæquatum* of metaphysics is EER, from which *entia rationis* are deliberately excluded,[17] there persists the claim that Suárez's metaphysics remains associated with mental constructions or with the "thinkable." Hans Urs von Balthasar, John Milbank, Olivier Boulnois, and Norman Wells present their interpretations of Suárez, more or less, in this manner.[18] Likewise, Courtine has argued that Suárez's conception of being is coterminous with the thinkable such that his metaphysics constitutes a step not only in the direction of "mentalism,"

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[16] *DM* 2.4.14. For an excellent account of the transcendental character of being according to Suárez, see Rolf Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

[17] Ibid.: "Item [objectum hujus scientiae] debere comprehendere non tantum substantias, sed etiam accidentia realia, non tamen entia rationis, et omnino per accidens…."

[18] Milbank, *The Word Made Strange: Theology, Language, Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), esp. 40-41, Boulnois, *Être et représentation: une généalogie de la métaphysique moderne à l'époque de Duns Scot (XIIIe-XIVe siècle)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999), 479-93; Wells, "*Esse Cognitum* and Suárez Revisited," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 67 (1993): 339-48. Here one might point out that even if it were the case that Suárez is concerned with the thinkable, as many suggest, it does not necessarily follow that the thinkable impedes one's access to what is actually real. Rather, much as the Aristotelian tradition has held, one's cognitive structures serve as an access to reality rather than its concealment. That said, as I shall argue, Suárez is even further removed from such a situation insofar as his concern is not with what can merely be thought—whether extra-mentally existent or not—but, more fundamentally, with what actually exists.

but towards a veritable supertranscendental science of the *cogitabile*.[19] Others still—such as Ludger Honnefelder, Jorge Gracia, Jan Aertsen, and Rolf Darge—emphasize the transcendental character of Suárez's metaphysics, and rightly so. They disagree, however, among themselves about the exact nature of that transcendental character. Honnefelder argues for a more Scotistic orientation,[20] while Darge and Aertsen maintain that Suárez's transcendental account is pre-Scotistic and in line with what one finds in the transcendental tradition that dates back to Philip the Chancellor.[21] Finally, Gracia thinks that Suárez's transcendental notion of being, almost an adumbration of Kant's own transcendental project, is more a function of the way we think about being rather than a structural account of being itself.[22]

It would not be entirely inaccurate to say that the various interpretations just mentioned emerge from a common view—at least broadly speaking—that regards the Suárezian metaphysics as basically 'essentialistic' in structure. For many, 'essentialism' is the villain that lurks throughout the history of philosophy and undermines thought with sundry errors that, like invasive species, have spread throughout modernity and postmodernity. To construe being in terms of an essence without any tie to existence ultimately frames being in terms of a thought-object or in terms of the merely logically possible. The consequences and implications of such a metaphysical outlook are, as many thinkers see it, enormous. Some, such as John Milbank, think that ontologies framed in terms of the 'thinkable'—such as what one finds espoused by many early modern thinkers—eventually decay into various forms of secular totalitarianism. Accordingly, the Suárezian contribution to that history of philosophy is something to be lamented rather than celebrated.

The fallout from a metaphysics of essence extends well beyond metaphysical concerns. James Gordley, for instance, thinks that Suárez's essentialistic metaphysics not only "bothered philosophers such as Etienne Gilson," for metaphysical reasons themselves but, insofar as the Jesuit uses that essentialist metaphysics to support his thinking on natural law, also "bothered natural law scholars such as Germain Grisez and John Finnis."[23] Predicated as they are upon an essence that prescinds from existence, the precepts of the natural law, as Suárez alleg-

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[19] See Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, esp. 533. Cf. J. Gracia, "Suárez's Conception of Metaphysics: A Step in the Direction of Mentalism?" *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 65 (1991): 287-309.

[20] Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens. Die formale Bestimmung der Seiendheit und Realität in der Metaphysik des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1990), 200-94.

[21] Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought: From Philip the Chancellor (ca. 1225) to Francisco Suárez* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 63-33; Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 75-84, 390-94.

[22] Gracia, "The Transcendental Attributes of Being in Scholasticism and Modernity: Suárez and Kant," in, ed. Jan Aertsen and Andreas Speer, *Was ist Philosophie im Mittelalter?* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1998), 213-25.

[23] Gordley, "Suárez on Natural Law," in Benjamin Hill and Henrik Lagerlund, eds., *The Philosophy of Francisco Suárez* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 209.

edly understands them, become overly abstract and purely theoretical.[24] Beyond moral philosophy, Suárez's 'essentialism' has also left its dubious mark on political thought and has deleteriously transformed the notion of sovereignty. Following Jean-Luc Marion's interpretation of the Suárezian *analogia entis* as one that reduces to univocity,[25] Philip Lorenz argues that Suárez flattens the medieval hierarchical metaphysics by abolishing the infinite distance between creator and creature. By construing the objective concept of being as univocal, Suárez places the creator on the same metaphysical plane as the created such that divine transcendence is obliterated. For Lorenz, the political implication of such a metaphysical maneuver, as expressed in William Shakespeare's *Richard II*, is that "the king is no longer like God; he is now reduced instead to a mere measure of the passing time."[26]

I doubt very much that the Bard had Suárez's *DM* 28.3—the *locus classicus* for the Jesuit's treatment of the *analogia entis*—in mind when he composed his play concerning King Richard II. If it is the case that Shakespeare regarded Suárez as a champion of metaphysical univocity which stood as the foundation for some misguided political reform, then he sorely misunderstood the Spanish theologian. I would be surprised, though, if Shakespeare had taken a position—at least an explicit one—on such a metaphysical matter. Indeed, with respect to the above-mentioned concerns centered upon Suárez's metaphysical essentialism I should point out that it is one thing to say that Suárez's is fundamentally an essentialist metaphysics; it is another thing to hold that an essentialistic metaphysics—whether of the Suárezian variety or otherwise—necessarily leads to the above-mentioned philosophical ills. It is certainly not evident *prima facie* that Suárez's metaphysics leads to the philosophical decadence that has begotten postmodernity, especially since the Jesuit would radically disagree with many of the conclusions that early modernity has reached. What is more, it strikes me that many interpretations of those who regard Suárez as an essentialist are simply wrongheaded, not only because they presuppose that his metaphysics is essentialist, but because they fundamentally misinterpret his theses in light of their own principles. This is especially the case regarding univocity. In this regard, José Pereira has rightly argued that the philosophical thought that emerges in the aftermath of Suárez, while admittedly heavily influenced by the Jesuit, constitutes more of an anamorphosis of the Suárezian metaphysics than its faithful re-presentation.[27] In short, it is far from a foregone

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[24] Ibid., 221.

[25] See Marion, *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes: analogie, création des vérités éternelles et fondement* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1981), c. 6.

[26] Lorenz, "'Christall Mirrors'—Analogy and Ontotheology in Shakespeare and Francisco Suárez," *Religion & Literature* 38 (2006): 113.

[27] Pereira, *Suárez: Between Scholasticism and Modernity* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2007), 126-39.

conclusion that Suárez is 'wrong' or irredeemable because he is an 'essentialist' metaphysician.

That said, if Suárez's metaphysics is not essentialistic at all but 'existential' in character, interpretations that operate obliviously to that reality are, for that reason, all the more unviable. Fortunately, the task of adjudicating these interpretive difficulties is facilitated by the nature of Suárez's *Disputationes metaphysicae* itself. The primary purpose of that work was to render explicit and systematic the metaphysical principles underlying Suárez's theology. Consequently, the metaphysical doctrines it presents are much more expressly articulated than preceding generations of medieval thinkers (e.g., Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, and Duns Scotus), whose metaphysical theories must be gleaned piecemeal from various theological (con)texts and speculatively reconstructed. Determining Suárez's metaphysical thought is not nearly as tedious. Indeed, as is well known, part of the novelty of the Suárezian project in the history of philosophy consists in the fact that he broke from the medieval commentarial tradition that had been slaved to the text of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. There had been precedents for such systematic efforts. Both Chrysostomos Javellus and Diego Mas departed from the commentarial tradition to bring order to the science of being. Javellus approached metaphysics in terms of its transcendental structure with a 1557 work aptly titled *Tractatus de transcendentibus*. What is more, Martin Grabmann and Jordán Gallego Salvadores call attention to the fact that in 1587, ten years before the publication of the *Disputationes metaphysicae*, Diego Mas offered his own systematic treatise devoted to the science of being, the *Metaphysica disputatio*.[28] Further, the role that Pedro da Fonseca's *Commentaria in libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* plays cannot be overlooked since, in that work, Fonseca frames many of the same problems with which Suárez will contend in his own work. Be that as it may, it remains the case that Suárez's accomplishment is more comprehensive (certainly more so than what Javellus and Mas provide) and more systematic than the metaphysical commentaries produced up to that point. One might say, then, that what Thomas Aquinas had done for theology with his *Summa theologiae*, Suárez achieves for metaphysics in his *Disputationes metaphysicae*, which develops metaphysical science according to the logic of its own inner exigencies.[29]

If metaphysics is a science, then (i) not only must it have its own proper object but (ii) that object must also enjoy a sufficient unity.[30] While the latter consequence (ii) pertains to the unity of the transcendental concept of being to which Suárez—

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[28] Grabmann, "Carácter e importancia de la Filosofía española a la luz de su desarrollo histórico," *Ciencia Tomista* 64 (1943): 5-25. Gallegos Salvadores, *Disputación Metafísica Sobre el Ente y sus Propiedades, Traducción y texto latino* (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 2003), 46-74.

[29] In addition to the texts of Javellus and Mas, one can also identify other instances of metaphysical tractates such as Thomas's *De ente et essentia* and Duns Scotus's *Tractatus de primo principio*. These, however, are even less comprehensive than what is found in Javellus and Mas.

[30] See Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 1.28.

like Scotus[31] and so many subsequent Jesuit scholastics (e.g. Hurtado, Arriaga, Lynch)[32]—was fiercely committed,[33] the former (i) raises the more immediate question of what constitutes the specificity of the Suárezian metaphysics.[34] Before giving his own magisterial account, Suárez explores six theses (*sententiae*=S) that offer divergent accounts of what constitutes the proper object of metaphysics. These theses run the complete gamut of objects. One (S_1) maintains that metaphysics considers "being most abstractly" (*ens abstractissime sumptum* = EAS) and includes not only real being, but also being *per accidens* and beings of reason, which latter two, as mentioned above, Aristotle had excluded from first philosophy.[35] On the opposite end of the spectrum, a much more restrictive thesis (S_3) holds that God alone is the proper object of metaphysics. The remaining *sententiae* range between these two extremes.[36]

1. Being in Excess

Suárez's engagement with S_1 is, I suggest, perhaps the most philosophically complex and also crucial for determining his view concerning the nature of metaphysics vis-à-vis one dominant trend of scholarly interpretation, namely, "representationalism." Put simply, representationalism holds that being is "voided … of all reference to real existence, and turned … into a representation, to something merely conceivable, or merely possible."[37] The representationalist interpretation of being goes hand-in-

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31 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 1-2, n. 26.

32 For Hurtado see *Universa philosophia*, Log., d. 9, s. 4, ss. 1, n. 19 (Lyon, 1624); for Arriaga see *Cursus philosophicus*, Logica, disp. 11, sec. 9, n. 77 (Lyon, 1669); for Lynch see *Universa philosophia*, Metaph., lib. 5, trat. 2, c. 1, n. 1 (tomus 3; Lyon, 1654).

33 Indeed, some have suggested from a read of *DM* 2.2.36 that Suárez is willing to reject analogy in favor of univocity, given his commitment to the unity of the concept of being. See, e.g., Walter Hoeres, "Francis Suárez and the Teaching of John Duns Scotus on *Univocatio entis*," in ed., J.K. Ryan, *John Duns Scotus, 1265–1965* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1965), 263-290; Philipp Rosemann, *Understanding Scholastic Thought with Foucault* (NY, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 176; John Milbank, *op. cit*. Nevertheless, as Suárez says in that very text and elsewhere (e.g., *DM* 2.1.14, ibid., 2.2.3) neither the unity of the concept of being nor its analogical character needs to be denied. I discuss this matter more fully in my final chapter.

34 *DM* 1.prooem.

35 Ibid., 1.1.2 (vol. 25, 2): "Prima igitur sententia est, ens abstractissime sumptum, quatenus sub se complectitur non solum universa entia realia, tam per se quam per accidens, sed etiam rationis entia, esse objectum adaequatum hujus scientia."

36 In what follows I identify each of these theses as S_1 through S_6. I also address the rationale behind each thesis in its proper place but, for convenience's sake, I list the six theses here: S_1 claims that the adequate object of metaphysics includes real being, beings of reason, and being *per accidens*; S_2 argues that the object of metaphysics includes real being and being *per accidens*; S_3 maintains that God alone is the adequate object of metaphysics; S_4 holds that immaterial substances constitute the object; S_5 asserts that being divided into the ten categories is the object; finally, S_6 maintains that the object of metaphysics consists only in substance.

37 José Pereira, *Suárez: Between Scholasticism and Modernity* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2007), 128. The accusation of representationalism is not limited to Suárez. Catherine Pickstock attributes it to Duns Scotus as well. See her *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation*

hand with the notion that Suárez secularizes ontology, as it were. If the creaturely character of created being determined by its existential—and thus causal—dependence upon God can be prescinded from, then only the now-secularized structures of being remain to be contemplated in pristine ontological isolation without fear of theological contagion.[38] But, if the created character of being is left out of consideration, what falls under the metaphysician's gaze? The representationalist's answer is: an essence represented in a concept or even just a thought object. Forlivesi neatly sums up this attitude: for the representationalist, "being is considered … as a *ratio* that does not express any tie with existence; consequently, such a *ratio* is reduced ultimately to a mere object of thought; thus metaphysics becomes the development of deductions starting out from such a *ratio* and is translated into a body of propositions conceived as being analytically justifiable."[39]

In light of such a perspective, Suárez's response to S_1 serves as a much-needed corrective. Indeed, if the representationalist interpretation(s) were correct, Suárez should wholeheartedly embrace S_1, which, instead, he completely rejects. What exactly is at stake with S_1? If EAS is the adequate object of metaphysics, as S_1 suggests, then what is the *ratio* or common character under which all being (real, *per accidens*, *rationis*) agree? Surely, real existence is out of the question since beings of reason—which S_1 includes in the adequate object—do not exist. Yet, if beings of reason do not exist, they can at least be thought, which is to say that beings of reason have the being of being objects of thought (*esse objectivum*). There is a precedent for this view, Suárez admits, since Aristotle himself had maintained that privations, negations, and non-beings (*non entia*) are subject to the analogy of being "insofar as they are intelligible."[40] In short, for S_1, intelligibility (not existence) is that unifying and most abstract feature common to—and, in fact, the determining factor of—being, whether real or not.

It is not surprising that Jan Aertsen has described S_1 as "supertranscendental."[41] While the exact origins of supertranscendental theory remain obscure,[42] super-

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of Philosophy (Wiley-Blackwell, 1997), 129-31. For a critique of her interpretation, see Richard Cross, "Where Angels Fear to Tread: Duns Scotus and Radical Orthodoxy," *Antonianum* 76 (2001): 7-41.

[38] This secularized understanding of ontology seems to be Courtine's interpretation of Suárez. See Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 531: "… toute la démarche suarézienne tend à établir qu'il appartient d'abord à la métaphysique (comme *metaphysica generalis*) de prendre en vue l'*ens* [*creatum*] *ut ens est* [et non pas *ut creatum*]."

[39] Forlivesi, "Impure Ontology: The Nature of Metaphysics and Its Object in Francisco Suárez's Texts," *Quaestio* 5 (2005): 559.

[40] Suárez, *DM* 1.1.2 (vol. 25, 2): "… Aristoteles privationes, negationes, seu non entia, subjicit analogiae entis, quatenus intelligibilia sunt…."

[41] Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 589-90.

[42] The earliest known reference to the term *supertranscendentia* is found in Pere Daguí's *Tractatus de differentia* (Jaén: Stanislaus Polonus, 1500: fol. 2r): "Et gratia huius difficultatis discipulis meis, et non omnibus sed <fol. 2v> parvulis, libellum brevissimum in apparentia scribere decrevi, et si maximum sit in existentia, cum subiectum eius sit supertranscendens, quod non solum inter ens et non ens ingreditur, verum etiam inter formalitates ac etiam interiora cuiuslibet formalitatis affirmatur." (I am grateful to Claus Andersen for drawing my attention to Daguí's text.) Domingo de Soto and Pedro da Fonseca both mention the notion in their own works. For Soto see *Summulae summularum*, lib. 1,

transcendentality, as noted above, is the notion that the transcendental character of being, which obtains among all real beings, can be further surpassed by an even broader concept that not only embraces real being but also that which cannot exist (viz., beings of reason or impossible objects). Several thinkers following in the wake of Suárez, such as the Protestant scholastic Clemens Timpler, operated with such a supertranscendental conception in mind. Timpler holds that metaphysics treats πᾶν νοητόν, that is, both being and non-being considered in terms of their 'intelligibility.'[43] Similarly, within Suárez's own Jesuit order, Maximilian Wietrowski (1660–1737) writes:

> There are, however, other significations for Being [*Ens*], evidently more ample than what transcendental Being would have, which is the most ample signification of Being—it is said to be supratranscendental, and, as the character of Being so taken, it agrees not only with all real Being, but also with what is impossible, or what neither is, nor is able to be in reality; and it extends broadly even to the order of the cognoscible [*cognoscibilis*], an order common to both the possible and impossible.[44]

Wietrowski's account of supertranscendentality is typical as found articulated among the late Jesuit scholastics such as Thomas Compton Carleton (1592–1666),[45] Antonio Bernardo de Quiros (1613–1668),[46] and Sylvester Mauro (1619–1687),[47] to name only a few.

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c. 6, n. 4 (Salamanca, 1554: 10): "Sunt etiam alij termini qui dicuntur supratranscendentes, qui ad plura se extendunt quam transcendentes, ut imaginabile &c." For Fonseca see *Institutionem dialecticarum*, c. 28 (ed. Cologne, 1586: 48): "Reliqua iuxta hanc sententiam sunt non transcendentiam: in quibus numerantur ea, quae a recentioribus dicuntur supertranscendentia, ut Opinabile, Cogitabile, Apprehensibile, et si quae sunt alia, quae non tantum de omnibus rebus veris, sed etiam de quibuscunque aliis vere affirmantur."

43 Timpler, *Metaphysicae systema methodicum*, lib. 1, c. 1, probl. 5 (Hanover, 1616).

44 Maximilian Wietrowski, *Philosophia disputata*, Pars I, *Ex Logica*, Concl. 13, c. 2, § 1, n. 251 (Prague, 1697: 83): "… sunt tamen Ens in alia significatione, ampliore videlicet, quam habeat Ens transcendentale, quae amplissima entis significatio, dicitur supratranscendentalis, ita, ut ratio Entis ita sumpti, conveniat non solum omni Enti reali, sed etiam impossibili, seu quod nec est, nec esse potest, realiter; patetque tam late, quam late patet ratio cognoscibilis, quae ratio communis utique est possibili & impossibili."

45 Thomas Compton Carleton, *Philosophia universa*, Logica, d. 2, s. 6, n. 5 (Antwerp, 1649: 8): "Termini *supertranscendentes* sunt qui non de rebus veris tantum, sed etiam de fictis affirmantur, ut *intelligibile*, *imaginabile*, unde ut dici solet, *latius patet ens imaginabile quam ens possibile*." (Emphases in original)

46 Antonio Bernaldo de Quiros, *Opus philosophicum* (Lyon, 1666: 65), Tr. 2, pars 1 de prooem. Log., d. 10, s. 8: "Confirmatur Logica formaliter considerat secundas intentiones, seu res ut subsunt secundis intentionibus; hoc est considerat res prout denominantur extrinsce ab actus intellectus; sicque Metaphysicus, & Logicus dicuntur agere de omni ente… ille quatenus agit de ente secundum quod ipsi competit intrinsece, & in se, Logicus secundum quod enti competit in *esse cognito* tun sic: sed *esse cognitum*, seu cognoscibile, & intelligibile abstrahit ab ente reali, & ratonis: ideo dicuntur termini *supertranscendentes* cognoscibile, seu imaginabile, quia enti & non enti competent…."

47 Sylvester Mauro, *Opus theologicum in tres tomos distributum* (Rome, 1687: 187), Tomus I, lib. 2, q. 58, n. 41: "Sicut praeter ens transcendentale, datur ens supertranscendentale abstrahens ab ente positive, & negativo, & pure denominativo, sic datur etiam verum supertranscendentale, & bonum supertranscendentale." Cf. also Doyle, *On the Borders of Being and Knowing*, 208-209.

S_1's explicit argument is as follows:

(*a*) EAS is able to be the adequate object of some science,
(*b*) EAS, because it is most abstract, is the adequate object of metaphysics, which is itself the most abstract science.
(*c*) Beings of reason are included in EAS.
(S_1) Therefore, beings of reason are included in the adequate object of metaphysics.[48]

Though Suárez rejects the conclusion, S_1, he is content to embrace *b* and is even willing to accept *a* (if understood correctly). The difficulty consists in *c*. Let us consider, then, how S_1 establishes its claims.

To establish *a*, S_1 argues that (a_1) EAS is able to be the object of the intellect according to one and the same *ratio*. If a_1 is the case, then (a_2) EAS is equally able to be the object of a single science according to the same *ratio* whereby it functions as an object of the intellect. Behind the inference of a_2 from a_1 (i.e., the shift from the object of an intellect to the object of a science) is the idea that any *ratio* that prescinds from all particular and contingent features accruing to individual beings will remain both a universal and a necessary feature of those particular things. But universality and necessity are precisely those features that a science examines. In other words, the philosophy of science that Aristotle establishes in his *Posterior Analytics* serves as the basis for the inference of a_2.[49] S_1 establishes a_1 from the fact that the intellect is able to understand "all things," which claim serves as the basis for *c*. Without a doubt, one can, for example, understand what human beings, cats, tables, wagons, dragons, and goat-stags are even though some of these are merely beings *per accidens* and others fictions. Yet, since, as a_1 holds, the intellect can know all these things according to one *ratio*, then a_2 follows and that same *ratio* is equally able to pertain to a single science (metaphysics) that treats all things which fall under EAS: namely, "beings of reason and real being, being per se and *per accidens*."[50] Finally, since the only possible contender for that common *ratio* is cognoscibility, S_1's fate as a supertranscendental science is sealed. If *c* holds on account of the fact that beings of reason are an object of the intellect, and if both *a* and *b* stand, then it would seem that S_1 necessarily follows and metaphysics is constituted as a supertranscendental science.

Suárez, as noted, is content to concede *b* and *a*, which means that if he is going to reject S_1, he must do so on the basis of undermining *c*. It strikes me that *c* can be rejected by employing one of the two following tactics (or both). Suárez can (1) argue that beings of reason are not in fact intelligible (which means they would not fall under EAS and, consequently, would not be an object of the intellect) or (2) he

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48 *DM* 1.1.2.

49 See *Posterior Analytics*, 1.6.

50 *DM* 1.1.2 (vol. 25, 2): "… tum etiam quia sicut intellectus illa omnia intelligit, ita haec scientia de omnibus illis disserit, nempe de entibus rationis et realibus, et de entibus per se et per accidens…."

can make a distinction between an object of the intellect and an object of a science so that to fall under the former does not imply inclusion in the latter. As it turns out, Suárez employs both tactics: one in his *Disputationes metaphysicae* and both in his *Tractatus de Anima*.

In the former work, Suárez maintains that no science properly and per se considers *entia rationis* since they are not really beings (*entia*) but, rather, defects of being. The reason for this claim is that beings of reason lack existence (*esse*)—which is to say, they are nothing—and so they are not directly knowable despite what a_1 claims.[51] One committed to S_1 might still object that if beings of reason are nothing, they at least share the name 'being' in common with real being and so they must be 'something' (*aliquid*). This would indeed support a supertranscendental conception of being wherein *aliquid* is taken as broad enough to embrace both being and non-being. Moreover, Suárez himself concedes that a certain community does in fact exist between real being and beings of reason since he denies that the name 'being' is said equivocally of the two.[52] Further still, as if speaking out of both sides of his mouth, Suárez has gone so far as to devote the fifty-fourth and final disputation of his *Disputationes metaphysicae* to an investigation of beings of reason. This has led some, such as Courtine and Boulnois, to suggest that the Suárezian conception of being is in fact determined by non-being (i.e., beings of reason).[53] Such an inference, however, is unwarranted. Shane Duarte points out that, for Aristotle, it is not always the case that everything a science treats falls under its subject matter or adequate object, and this for two reasons.[54] First, a science always pursues knowledge of its subject's first principles or causes,[55] but those same principles and causes, at times, are not the adequate object of a science. A substantial form, for instance, is the principle of a material substance but is not itself a material substance. Yet, as is well known, for Aristotle, the subject matter of physics is just material substance or, what is the same, mobile being.[56] Second, Aristotle holds that it pertains to a science to demonstrate the attributes or proper-

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[51] Ibid., 1.1.7 (vol. 25, 4): "Imo, ut existimo, ad nullam scientiam per se et primario pertinent, quia, cum non sint entia, sed potius defectus entium, non sunt per se scibilia."

[52] Ibid., 54.1.9. Here, Suárez seems to be more accommodating to *entia rationis* than either Hurtado de Mendoza or Rodrigo de Arriaga, who, despite operating with certain attenuated supertranscendental inclinations, maintain that real being and beings of reason are equivocal. Cf. Hurtado, *Universa philosophia*, Metaph., d. 19, s. 4, n. 77; Arriaga, *Cursus philosophicus*, Logica, d. 11, sec. 1. For a discussion of the supertranscendental orientation of Hurtado and Arriaga see Theo Kobusch, "Arriagas Lehre vom Gedankending," in, eds. Tereza Saxlová and Stanislav Sousedík, *Rodrigo de Arriaga (†1667). Philosoph und Theologe* (Prague: Karolinum, 1998), 128.

[53] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 263-67, 532. Boulnois, *Être et représentation*, 480.

[54] Duarte, *Francisco Suárez*, Metaphysical Disputation I, *On the Nature of First Philosophy or Metaphysics* (Washington, D.C.: The Cathoic University of America Press, 2021), xxix.

[55] See Aristotle, *Physics* 1.1.184a10-16.

[56] Duarte, *Francisco Suárez*, Metaphysical Disputation I, xxix.

ties that necessarily follow from the object of a science,[57] yet those same properties do not fall under the subject matter of a science.[58]

Be all that as it may, what are we to make of Suárez's claim regarding an analogical community obtaining between real being and beings of reason? Would not admitting such a community shift his metaphysics in a supertranscendental direction since being is no longer restricted only to that which is real?[59] I will return to this point about analogy momentarily. More immediately, let us consider how Suárez frames his discussion of beings of reason within the final disputation, vis-à-vis analogy and show how he remains consistent with the initial determinations made in the *Disputationes metaphysicae*.

In the opening preface to the final disputation, Suárez recalls that, as was already established in the first disputation, beings of reason are not directly contained under the object of metaphysics, but are excluded.[60] Nevertheless, to "complete" his metaphysical investigation, he brings beings of reason to the fore. By "complete" I take Suárez to mean that it pertains to one and the same science to study opposites, as Aristotle teaches.[61] Since the opposite of being is simply non-being, the extension is determined by considering its negation. Beings of reason are one such negation. Nevertheless, Suárez is clear: beings of reason should not be treated in their own right or even as if they were real beings, for they are "quasi-shadowy beings."

> Since beings of reason are not true beings [*vera entia*], but quasi-shadowy beings, they are not intelligibles [*intelligibilia*] per se, but through some analogy and conjunction to true being, and therefore they are not also knowables [*scibilia*] per se, nor is a science given that would be instituted to know properly and per se only such [beings of reason].[62]

This text reveals four important features of Suárez's metaphysics. First, it marks a hard distinction between 'true being' and 'beings of reason.' One might ask: in virtue of what is true being 'true'? 'True being' is just the same as 'real being' since the former is 'true' precisely because it has an aptitude to existence.[63] As we shall see in the following chapter, it is real being's order to existence that constitutes it as 'real.' Beings of reason lack such an aptitude to existence; thus they are not 'real.' Second, mention is made of 'cognoscibility' and 'intelligibility,' but not according to a supertranscendental conception, for Suárez restricts the scope of cognoscibility to true (real) being. Being is intelligible, yes, but it is intelligible only because it exists,

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57 See Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 1.4.

58 Duarte, *Francisco Suárez*, Metaphysical Disputation I, xxx.

59 Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 263-64; Boulnois, *Être et representation*, 481.

60 *DM* 54.proem.1.

61 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 4.2.1004a2-30.

62 *DM* 54.proem.1 (vol. 26, 1014): "… cum entia rationis non sint vera entia, sed quasi umbrae entium, non sunt per se intelligibilia, sed per aliquam analogiam et conjunctionem ad vera entia, et ideo nec etiam sunt per se scibilia, nec datur scientia quae per se primo propter illa solum cognoscenda sit instituta."

63 See, e.g., *DM* 54.1.4.

which is to say, intelligibility follows from being and not vice versa. Third, a correlate to the second, Suárez maintains that beings of reason are not in fact knowable, which would eliminate a_1's claim that beings of reason are an object of the intellect. Much as pure potentiality cannot directly be known on Aristotle's view, for which reason he terms it ὕλη (wood),[64] beings of reason are not directly knowable in themselves. Similarly, Suárez maintains that beings of reason "cannot be known except through comparison with the true and real character of being… For what is a *fictum*, or even apparent, should be understood through comparison to that which truly is."[65] Fourth—and requiring some interpretive nuance—this text is notable insofar as it shows that Suárez identifies an analogical community that includes both beings of reason and real being. Yet, such a community appears to generate a potential problem. If real being and beings of reason form an analogical community, it would seem that some metaphysical continuity—however tenuous—between the two must exist. But if there is some metaphysical continuity, would it not be the case that Suárez undermines his previous three claims, which banish beings of reason from any metaphysical study? While I shall treat Suárez's doctrine of analogy separately in Chapter Five, some brief comments must be made here to allay potential confusion.

Courtine and Boulnois are correct to point out that Suárez asserts an analogy between real being and beings of reason, but they go too far in suggesting that the Suárezian metaphysics is therefore determined by the latter and constituted as a form of *représentation*. They do not take into account the kind of analogy at play in the Suárezian metaphysics, on the one hand, and, on the other, the kind of analogy that pertains to beings of reason and real being. If beings of reason are in fact called 'being,' it is not because they enjoy "some true similitude with real being."[66] This is actually a rather significant claim given that, in contrast, Pedro Hurtado de Mendoza—a Jesuit in the generation after Suárez who flirts with a supertranscendental conception of being[67]—maintains that even "non-being is a certain imitation of being."[68] While Hurtado and Suárez may have different theories regarding the nature of beings of reason,[69] the fact that Hurtado finds a community of imitation between being and non-being, while Suárez, who identifies beings of reason with non-being but discounts any such community with real being, is not unimportant

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[64] See *Physics* 1.6.

[65] *DM* 54.proem.2 (vol. 26, 1015): "… [entia rationis] intelligi non possunt nisi per comparationem ad veras et reales rationes… nam quod fictum est, vel apparens, per comparationem ad id quod vere est, intelligi debet."

[66] Ibid., 54.1.4 (vol. 26, 1016): "… [entia rationis] neque etiam habent veram aliquam similitudinem cum entibus realibus…."

[67] Kobusch, "Arriagas Lehre vom Gedankending," 128.

[68] Hurtado, *Universa philosophia* Metaph., d. 1, s. 2, ss. 1, n. 51 (Lyon, 1624: 701): "Sed ens rationis est etiam oppositum enti reali, quia alterum est ens, alterum vero non ens, sed quaedam entis imitatio."

[69] For an excellent treatment of beings of reason within Baroque scholasticism, see Daniel Novotný, Ens rationis *from Suárez to Caramuel: A Study in Scholasticism of the Baroque Era* (Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2013).

in distancing the *Doctor eximius* from a supertranscendental conception of metaphysics. How, then, should we make sense of the following text?

> A being of reason, although it would participate in some way in the name of being [*nomen entis*], and not merely a chance equivocal (as some say), but through some analogy and proportionality [*proportionalitatem*] to true being, it is not, however, able to participate or agree with real being in its concept.[70]

While an analogy is introduced, Suárez qualifies it in terms of 'proportionality.' In the course of his discussion of the analogical community obtaining within real being, Suárez, as was customary at the time, marks a basic distinction between an analogy of attribution and an analogy of proper proportionality. While the latter was favored among the Thomists, chiefly Cajetan[71] and John of St. Thomas,[72] Suárez rejects it for the reason that, as he sees it, proportionality functions only "metaphorically and improperly."[73] The entitative perfection of being, however, pertains intrinsically to all beings—whether that be God, material substance, accidents, etc.—and so cannot be accommodated by the extrinsic function of proportionality.[74] In explicating the analogical structure of the objective concept of being, which constitutes the "object of metaphysics,"[75] Suárez turns instead to an analogy of attribution (=AA). Such an analogy involves at least the two following conditions:

> AA_1: A common analogical perfection, *x*, is possessed intrinsically by all the analogates.
> AA_2: There is a causal relation of dependence among the analogates with respect to *x*, such that one or more of the analogates possesses *x* in virtue of a (prime) analogate that is *x* in virtue of itself.

We can consider Suárez's thinking with respect to analogy as follows. Let *p* and *q* be members of an analogical community. An analogy of attribution would occur when some entitative perfection, *x*, exists intrinsically in both *p* and *q*, but in such a way that one of the members, say, *q*, possesses *x* only in virtue of its causal dependence upon *p*. This analogical framework cannot accommodate the relationship between real being and beings of reason insofar as AA_1 is not satisfied.[76] AA_1 is not satisfied because beings of reason enjoy no *intrinsic* entitative perfection. Yet, insofar as they have *esse objectivum*, which amounts to an extrinsic denomination in relationship to an intellect, beings of reason are apt to enter an analogy of proportionality. Such an analogy of proportionality, as just noted, trades only upon extrinsic relations. For Suárez, an analogy of proportionality occurs when one analogate, *y*, enjoys

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70 *DM* 54.1.9 (vol. 26, 1017): "… ens rationis, quamvis aliquo modo participet nomen entis, et non mere aequivoce et casu (ut aiunt), sed per aliquam analogiam et proportionalitatem ad verum ens."

71 See Cajetan, *De nominum analogiam*, c. 3.

72 See John of St. Thomas, *Cursus philosophicus*, *Ars Logica*, pars II, q. 13, a. 3.

73 *DM* 28.3.11.

74 Ibid.

75 Ibid., 2.1.1.

76 Ibid., 28.3.14.

some perfection absolutely through its own form which other analogates do not possess intrinsically but only in comparison with or in relation to *y*.[77] The central difference between attribution and proportionality, on Suárez's view, consists in the manner in which the analogical perfection is possessed. In an intrinsic attribution, all members intrinsically enjoy the perfection, *x*, though not to the same degree, since one member possesses *x* through itself whereas others do so through causal dependence. In proportionality, one member alone intrinsically enjoys the perfection and the remaining analogates have that perfection extrinsically.

We can see, then, why Suárez uses proportionality—not attribution—to explain the metaphysical community obtaining between real being and beings of reason. As beings of reason lack any intrinsic entitative perfection, they can only be called 'being' through an extrinsic denomination in relation to real being.[78] The consequence of this qualification is significant since it indicates that what Suárez has in mind is only a 'nominal' as opposed to a 'metaphysical' community. This is Aristotle's point when he says that one can even call privations and negations 'being.' "Sometimes Aristotle explained the analogy of being exactly as it extends to these beings [of reason], … there he was not allocating an object of this science [i.e., metaphysics], but was explaining the signification of the term [*vocis*] so as to remove equivocation."[79] Despite identifying an analogical community—one described in terms of proportionality—between real being and beings of reason, it remains the case that, for Suárez, beings of reason are excluded from the proper and adequate object of metaphysics.

If the objective concept of being is framed in terms of attribution, and beings of reason are banished from such a framework, they are thereby excluded from the concept of being. Suárez indicates this consequence in his *Disputationes metaphysicae* and unpacks the implications of this exclusion even further in his *Tractatus de Anima*. In that latter text, Suárez deploys both tactics mentioned above to undermine *c* and consequently S_1.

The particular problem Suárez addresses in the *Tractatus de Anima* passage (viz., what constitutes the adequate object of the intellect) is admittedly distinct from the discussion of the adequate object of metaphysics.[80] Nevertheless, the passage in question does bear directly upon our present concern. In the course of deter-

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[77] Ibid., 28.3.11.

[78] For an excellent discussion of Suárez's theory of extrinsic denomination see John P. Doyle, "*Prolegomena* to a Study of Extrinsic Denomination in the Work of Francis Suarez, S.J.," *Vivarium* 22 (1984): 121-160. This is reprinted in *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548-1617)*, ed. Victor M. Salas (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010), c. 6.

[79] *DM* 1.1.6 (vol. 25, 3): "… aliquando Aristoteles analogiam entis declaraverit, prout se extendit ad haec entia, … ibi non assignabat hujus scientiae objectum, sed explicabat vocis significationem ad aequivocationem tollendam."

[80] *Tractatus de Anima*, lib. 4, c. 1 (vol. 3, 713): "An et quodam sit aedequatum objectum intellectus nostris."

mining what the adequate object of the intellect is, Suárez notes that there are two opinions pertaining to this question. Thomas Aquinas answers in terms of material quiddity,[81] which opinion both Cajetan and Capreolus are content to follow.[82] Duns Scotus, however, maintains that being itself is the proper object of the intellect.[83] In establishing his own answer to this question, Suárez tells us that: "whatever has some entity [*entitatem aliquam habet*], can be known by our intellect."[84] As examples, Suárez adduces God, angels, material things, and the accidents and essences of material things. There is a mutual relationship between intelligibility and the intellect—for which reason they are adequate—since whatever is intelligible can be known by the intellect. Obviously the question is: in virtue of what is something intelligible? Consistent with what he says in the *Disputationes metaphysicae*, Suárez maintains that something is intelligible insofar as it has being.[85]

This is all well and good, but is it not the case that Suárez is just moving in circles? Being is the adequate object of the intellect, he says. Why? Because it is intelligible. Why is it intelligible? Because it is being. Yet, the circularity is only apparent, I suggest; we are attuned to a question we bring to the text rather than to the text itself, which answers an altogether different question. Suárez is asking whether the Thomists are correct in their claim that only material quiddity is the adequate object of the intellect. To refute that claim, Suárez need only show that there are non-material beings (viz., God and the angels) that, because of their being, are intelligible. In essence, Suárez expands the proper object of the intellect in response to the restrictive Thomist strategy.

That said, Suárez does offer a direct answer to our question regarding whether beings of reason are included in the adequate object of the intellect. He argues: "The adequate object of our intellect, considered as it is in itself, is being in its full extent [*in tota latitudine*]."[86] Again, we meet the notion that EAS is the adequate object of the intellect. This claim follows from the fact that the adequate object embraces all that which can be known by some power [*potentia*]. But the intellect is able to know whatever has the character (*ratio*) of being, which, accordingly, is the intellect's total

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[81] Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 12, a. 4; ibid., I, q. 84, a. 7; ibid., I, q. 85, a. 1.

[82] *Tractatus de Anima*, lib. 4, c. 1, n. 2 (vol. 3, 713): "In hac re D. Thomas opinatur objectum intellectus humani esse quidditatem rei materialis… sequunturque Cajetanus ibidem et Capreolus."

[83] Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, nos. 137–139 (ed. Vatican, vol. 3, 85-87). Suárez, I should point out, takes certain liberties with the text of Scotus and tells us that for the Subtle Doctor it is *ens in quantum verum* that constitutes the adequate object of the intellect. Scotus makes no mention of this particular aspect of being and instead holds that the first object of the intellect is being (*ens*) in terms of a primacy of "*communitatis et virtualitatis*."

[84] *Tractatus de Anima*, lib. 4, c. 1, n. 2 (vol. 3, 713): "Prima conclusio: quidquid entitatem aliquam habet, potest ab intellectu nostro cognosci."

[85] Ibid. (vol. 3, 713): "… quidquid est intelligibile, potest intellectu cognosci, nam intelligibile et intellectus sibi mutuo respondent, atque adaequantur, sed quidquid habet entitatem est intelligibile…."

[86] Ibid., n. 3 (vol. 3, 713): "Objectum adaequatum intellectus nostri secundum se considerati est ens in tota latitudine sua spectatum."

object itself.[87] Thus far, Suárez's reasoning seems to approximate S_1. Importantly, he then raises the question whether beings of reason are included in EAS. As we know, S_1 says 'yes,' but Suárez says 'no.' He observes that several authors do in fact think that the adequate object includes beings of reason since the adequate object should contain whatever the intellect has the power to know. But the intellect knows beings of reason, from which one can infer their inclusion in the adequate object.[88] This is the claim that *c* makes.

Suárez disputes *c*, which amounts to rejecting the notion that beings of reason are intelligible per se. This is the same tactic he employed in the *Disputationes metaphysicae*, but now he develops it further in the *Tractatus de Anima*. The object of some (intellectual) power should be formally one in some manner. Also, all the things that that power can attain should be able to fall under that formal unity. Suárez does not exactly spell out what he intends by this last claim, but his meaning is not difficult to ascertain. In relation to the sense of sight, for example, while there is an irreducible diversity of visible things, they all agree in terms of their visibility.[89] The formal character of visibility is the unifying character or *ratio* in virtue of which all visible things can be grasped by the power of sight. With respect to the intellect, the adequate object must likewise enjoy a formal unity in virtue of which all those things that fall under its power—and thus its proper object—can be known.[90] But, argues Suárez, no such formal unity exists between real being and beings of reason, "since a being of reason is nothing [*nihil sit*] and only agrees with real being in name."[91]

Suárez's argument amounts, once again, to the claim that beings of reason are not directly or per se intelligible. If they are "known," it is always and only through their relationship to real being. Interestingly, Suárez appeals to Thomas—whose own theory regarding the adequate object of the intellect is rejected—to establish his point about beings of reason. For Thomas, something is intelligible only insofar as it exists. But beings of reason are nothing other than a certain "appearance of being" and are merely thought about in proportion to "true beings" (*vera entia*). For this reason, Suárez holds that their "intelligibility is, as it were, secondary, and not directly or per se."[92] He concludes, "Thus it is established that the object of the

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[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Here we need not concern ourselves with whether that visibility stems from self-illumination or reflective illumination. The fact remains that, either way, the object is visible.

[90] For a much more extensive discussion of what constitutes, for Suárez, the proper object for each sense as well as for the intellect, see Duarte, *Francisco Suárez*, Metaphysical Disputation I, xxxvii-liv.

[91] *Tractatus de Anima*, lib. 4, c. 1, n. 4 (vol. 3, 714): "… reale ens, et rationis non habent rationem formalem unam ullo modo, cum ens rationis nihil sit, solaque entis voce conveniat cum reali enti…."

[92] Ibid. (vol. 3, 714): "… ergo ejus intelligibilitas est veluti secundaria, ac adeo non est talis directe, ac per se."

intellect is true and real being, and nothing can be known that is not such true [being] or that is only apparently [being]."[93]

What emerges clearly from Suárez's discussion is that only that which is truly real or exists can fall under the proper object of the intellect and—important for our discussion—of metaphysics as well. Does this mean that the object of the intellect and the object of metaphysics are identical? Suárez answers 'no.'

> One thing is called the object of Metaphysics in one way, and [the object] of the intellect in another way; for it is the object of metaphysics inasmuch as it signifies a certain character [*ratio*] of something abstracted from matter according to being [*esse*]; [something is the object] of the intellect, however, inasmuch as it comprehends everything. Accordingly, being, inasmuch as it is the object of metaphysics, is distinguished from mobile being; but being, inasmuch as it is the object of the intellect, contains everything.[94]

This is a fascinating text that raises as many questions as it answers. For the moment, we can see more fully how Suárez's strategy for rejecting S_1 unfolds. First, beings of reason, because they lack existence, are not per se or directly intelligible; *c* is therefore undermined. Since beings of reason are not directly intelligible in themselves, they cannot rightly be said to fall under the adequate object of the intellect. If *c* does not hold, then S_1 does not follow. Second, there is a distinction between the adequate object of the intellect and that of metaphysics, which even further removes beings of reason from the domain of metaphysics. The object of metaphysics, as Suárez suggests here, is more restrictive than the object of the intellect inasmuch as the latter embraces *everything*. This is not to say that the object of the intellect includes beings of reason, for they are simply no-thing. Rather, Suárez identifies the specificity of metaphysics in its distinction from other sciences, which treat being but under specific aspects. The aspect that metaphysics considers is being simply as distinguished from material or mobile being, which pertains to physics. With these determinations in place, we see that Suárez is capable of rejecting *c* and, consequently, unequivocally rejects S_1: the supertranscendental conception of metaphysics.

Yet, as just mentioned, with this last text an important question arises. In focusing on being in abstraction from matter, does Suárez intend to suggest that metaphysics has as its proper object immaterial being? Suárez rejects this idea insofar as he rejects S_3. To make sense of Suárez's point, his critique of the thesis that God constitutes the adequate object of metaphysics should be considered. But before we turn to S_3 I must briefly touch upon Suárez's rejection of S_2. In agreement with S_1, S_2 holds that being in its total latitude (EAS) constitutes the adequate ob-

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[93] Ibid. (vol. 3, 714): "Statutum ergo sit objectum intellectus esse ens verum et reale, nihilque cognosci posse, quod tale non sit vere, vel apparenter…."

[94] Ibid., n. 9 (vol. 3, 715): "… aliter ens objectum dici Metaphysicae, et aliter intellectus: metaphysicae enim est objectum prout significat rationem quamdam abstrahentem a materia secundum esse: intellectus autem: prout omnia comprehendit, quo fit, ut ens objectum metaphysicae distinguatur ab ente mobili: ens vero, quod objectum est intellectus, omnia comprehendat."

ject of metaphysics, which includes real being and being *per accidens*. S_2, however, excludes beings of reason from EAS for the same reason as does Suárez; beings of reason do not have any entity or reality.[95] S_2 includes being *per accidens* within the adequate object because it regards being *per accidens* as real being for they (beings *per accidens*) also "participate in the character [*ratio*] of being and its attributes."[96]

Suárez's response to S_2 is relatively simple. He denies the identity between real being and being *per accidens*. In fact, no science treats being *per accidens* since it is accidental (in the sense of contingent) and only derives from the intention of some agent. Being *per accidens* cannot be said to be truly one since it only emerges as an aggregate out of many things.[97] Since being *per accidens* lacks a proper unity, it does not have a proper definition nor does it enjoy any real attributes (*passiones*) that could be demonstrated of it. Given that (1) it is the task of a science to demonstrate the proper attributes that follow upon its object and that (2) being *per accidens* has no real attributes, there can be no science whatsoever that investigates being *per accidens*.[98] While Suárez admits that there is an analogical community between real being and being per accidens, just as is the case with beings of reason, that analogical community is merely nominal and remains "only a certain imperfect analogy of proportionality."[99]

2. Being in Restriction

2.1 Divine Science

Unlike S_1 and S_2, which both portray the adequate object of metaphysics in its complete latitude—in fact, excessively so—the remaining *sententiae* are reductive in their construal of that object. S_3 is the extreme opposite of S_1 and holds that only the "supreme real being" (God) constitutes the adequate object of metaphysics.[100] S_4 is a little less restrictive—but only slightly so—insofar as it maintains that immaterial being (including God and all the "intelligences") is the adequate object of metaphysics.[101] Both advance a notion of metaphysics that, while concerned with truly real being, excludes material being. These theses, especially S_3, immediately harken to the controversy between Avicenna and Averroes that embroiled subsequent theologians in the High Middle Ages. More remotely, the controversy stems from ambiguities in Aristotle's doctrine itself, a casualty, one might say, of the

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95 *DM* 1.1.4.

96 Ibid. (vol. 25, 3): "… entia per accidens, quia etiam haec realia sunt, vereque participant rationem entis et passiones ejus…."

97 Ibid., 1.1.5.

98 Ibid.

99 Ibid. (vol. 25, 3): "… sed solum per quamdam imperfectam analogiam proportionalitatis…."

100 Ibid., 1.1.8 (vol. 25, 4): "Tertia itaque opinio, et per extremum opposita, solum supremum ens reale (Deum videlicet) facit objectum hujus scientiae adaequatum."

101 Ibid., 1.1.14.

haphazard character of the *Metaphysics*. In the fourth book of the *Metaphysics* Aristotle famously argues that this science—what would later be called 'metaphysics'—contemplates 'being as being' (τὸ ὄν ᾗ ὄν) and all those attributes that follow upon being.[102] In the sixth book of the *Metaphysics*, however, he distinguishes three theoretical sciences of which the highest is called 'theological' (θεολογική) since it treats the highest beings (viz., the gods). These beings are entirely separate from matter, and so, whereas physics deals with beings that are movable (i.e., material), first philosophy or, as Aristotle puts it, "theology" treats immaterial substances.[103]

The complications Aristotle's texts pose for his medieval interpreters are obvious,[104] but, for his part, Avicenna maintained, together with Aristotle,[105] that "it should pertain to none of the sciences to establish the existence of its own subject."[106] But the existence of God is something that is in question for metaphysics and, in fact, is only reached at its conclusion. To Avicenna's mind, this means that God cannot be the subject of metaphysics.[107] If not God, then being insofar as it is being (*ens inquantum ens*) constitutes the subject of metaphysics,[108] which suggests that Avicenna is content to adopt the conclusion from the fourth book of the *Metaphysics*. Averroes's response to Avicenna, whom he takes to have "erred greatly" (*peccavit maxime*), is severe.[109] He rejects Avicenna's conclusion on the basis of the same premise that Avicenna had adopted, namely, that no science demonstrates the existence of its subject matter. While Averroes agrees with this proposition, he holds that God's existence is demonstrated at the conclusion of natural philosophy, as witnessed in the eighth book of Aristotle's *Physics*.[110] This means that God properly forms the subject of metaphysics and, like Aristotle's account in the sixth book of the *Metaphysics*, Averroes construes first philosophy as a theology.

Historically, Greek philosophers following immediately in the wake of Aristotle (e.g., Alexander of Aphrodisias) tended to operate with a theological interpretation of the *Metaphysics*.[111] Philosophical theologians in the High Middle Ages (e.g., Al-

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102 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 4.1.1003a21.

103 Ibid., 6.1.1026a17–33.

104 The classic work on this topic remains Albert Zimmermann, *Ontologie oder Metaphysik?: Die Diskussion über den Gegenstand der Metaphysik im 13. Und 14. Jahrhundert* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965). See also, more currently, Olivier Boulnois, *Métaphysique rebelles: Genèse et structures d'une science au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2018).

105 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 6.1.1025b19.

106 Avicenna Latinus, *Liber de philosophia prima sive scientia divina,* tr. 1, c. 1 (ed. S. Van Riet; Louvain–Leiden: E. Peeters–E.J. Brill, 1977: 5, ln. 85): "Nulla enim scientiarum debet stabilire esse suum subiectum."

107 Ibid.

108 Ibid., tr. 1, c. 2.

109 Averroes, *Aristotelis de Physico auditu, cum Auerrois Cordubensis Commentariis*, Lib. 1, summa 4, c.5, n. 83 G (Venice apud Iunctas, 1562).

110 Ibid.

111 For a discussion of the development of metaphysics in terms of theology in post-Aristotelian antiquity, see Dominic O'Meara, "The Transformation of Metaphysics in Late Antiquity," in, ed.,

bertus Magnus,[112] Duns Scotus,[113] and even Suárez), however, tended to side with Avicenna, albeit usually with revisions and emendations. In his discussion of S_3, Suárez calls attention to the controversy between the two Islamic thinkers. Averroes's claim, it seems, follows upon a certain interpretation to which the Aristotelian texts lend themselves. In the opening of his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle describes first philosophy as concerned with the "first causes of things."[114] This means, then, that first philosophy is 'divine'—since the 'first causes' are simply the gods—and rightly called 'theology.'[115] But since 'theology' is nothing other than the science of God, S_3 reasons that God is the adequate object of metaphysics, which should therefore be construed as a theology.[116]

While S_3's argument rests upon an interpretation of Aristotle's text, which ranges over the debate with an undisputed authority, there are additional considerations that S_3 offers in support of its claim. The truly philosophical reasons for S_3 emerge when it argues against the claim that God forms the 'primary object' of metaphysics as opposed to its 'adequate object.' I take the difference between the two to be this: a primary object does not *per se* exclude the introduction of other objects into a science's purview. To illustrate this, we can consider the above-given example of sight and visibility. To identify visibility as the adequate object of sight does not restrict that object either to self-illuminating objects or light-reflecting objects, for all fall under the same adequate object of visibility. Nevertheless, the sun, insofar as it is unsurpassed in luminosity, could rightly be said to be the primary object of sight, which claim is not inconsistent with saying that other objects also fall under sight's adequate object. In short, there are other things—even if not as preeminent in their visibility—that are visible. Relating God to the object of metaphysics in such a fashion introduces metaphysical and theological consequences repugnant to a Christian theologian such as Suárez. Just as to hold that the sun is the primary object of sight is to make it essentially one more visible object among others; likewise to maintain that God is the primary object of metaphysics reduces God to just one more being among others. Divine transcendence and infinitude would thereby be attenuated. But, as S_3 points out, "God is, according to His own proper character [*ratio*], nobler

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Gregory T. Doolan, *The Science of Being as Being: Metaphysical Investigations* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012), 36-52.

[112] See Albertus Magnus, *Metaphysica*, 1.1.2 (ed. Bernard Geyer; Aschendorff, 1960).

[113] See Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis*, lib. 1, q. 1 (Franciscan Institute, 1997). While Scotus sides with neither Avicenna nor Averroes in this text, it is clear that his position is much closer to Avicenna than to Averroes. He certainly chides Averroes for his remarks against Avicenna.

[114] *DM* 1.1.8 (vol. 25, 4): "Aristoteles etiam, libro 1 Metaphysicae, in principio, ait hanc scientiam contemplari primam rerum causam…"; cf. Aristotle *Metaphysics* 1.2.983a1-10.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Ibid.

than any character [*ratio*] that can be common to God and creature."[117] The reason for this is that God's own proper character (*ratio*) is in itself infinitely perfect, but any character (*ratio*) common to God and creatures is not also infinite since that common character must also accommodate beings that are finite (viz., creatures).

In order to preserve divine infinitude, S_3 insists that God and creature cannot agree in any intelligible character (*ratio*) whatsoever. In fact, S_3 goes so far as to insist that created objects themselves cannot agree with each other according to their own proper characters (*rationes*) within one adequate object.[118] Much less could it be the case, then, that God and any creature should agree under the same adequate object. Finally, S_3 argues that if—*per impossibile*—it were the case that God and creature could agree in some common object, that object would be prior to both since "a common object is by nature prior to that which is contained in it."[119] It would be absurd, however, to maintain that something could be naturally prior to God. Therefore, it cannot be the case that God is the principle object contained in something more common. Rather, it must be that God is the adequate object.[120]

S_3's concern that God not be subsumed under a more common *ratio*—even that of Being—is significant since it seems to anticipate concerns regarding 'onto-theology' that so many contemporary philosophers of religion dread. John Milbank and his Radical Orthodox compatriots (e.g., Catherine Pickstock) have frequently labeled not only Suárez but also Duns Scotus as "onto-theologians" who locate God under an ontological category that destroys divine transcendence. The concept of being, like the despoiled Egyptian gold that the Israelites took with them, is fashioned into a conceptual idol. Marion has raised similar concerns about metaphysics' tendency to turn 'being' into an idol with which the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has very little, if anything at all, to do.[121] Suárez—who, according to Marion, has "marched toward univocity" and reduced God to the same metaphysical level as creation—would seem to be guilty of such idolatry.[122] Yet, just what constitutes 'onto-theology' and why the shadow it casts over subsequent metaphysical thinking is an unmitigated philosophical horror are not always clear, as Richard Cross rightly complains.[123] Likewise, Boulnois has suggested that questions regarding just what onto-theology is and when it commenced have received so many differ-

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117 Ibid., 1.1.9 (vol. 25, 4-5): "… Deus secundum propriam rationem quid nobilius est quam esse possit quaelibet ratio communis Deo et creaturis…."

118 Ibid., 1.1.9.

119 Ibid. (vol. 25, 5): "… quia commune objectum est prius natura iis quae sub ipso continentur, quia est superius ipsis…."

120 Ibid.

121 See Marion, *God without Being*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 16, 29-37.

122 See Marion, *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes*, 96-109.

123 See Cross, "Duns Scotus and Suárez at the Origins of Modernity," in, eds. Wayne Hankey and Douglas Hedley, *Deconstructing Radical Orthodoxy: Postmodern Theology, Rhetoric and Truth* (London: Ashgate, 2005), 65.

ent responses that it remains an "ambiguous term."[124] Heidegger, for example, has suggested that onto-theology is constitutive of the history of metaphysics itself; Édouard-Henri Wéber has claimed that Henry of Ghent, in making God the first object of knowledge, initiated onto-theology;[125] others still, such as Alain de Libera, have maintained that onto-theology commenced with the successors of Henry of Ghent, especially Duns Scotus, who operated according to the rubrics of an Avicennian ontology.[126] Attempting to gain some philosophical clarity on the matter, Cross explains that the problem with onto-theology is that it "in some sense prioritizes *being* over God."[127] This prioritization is, as we have seen, the very concern that leads S_3 to reject the notion that a *ratio* common to God and creature can be the adequate object of metaphysics. Suárez's confrontation with S_3 clearly indicates that he is not unaware of the issue and is even proleptically attuned to the objections that contemporary theorists would level against his metaphysics.

Suárez's refutation of S_3 unfolds in a bipartite manner. One aspect takes experience as its point of departure; the other considers the a priori conditions for the possibility of attaining natural knowledge of God. To Suárez's lights, not only does S_3 fail as a proper interpretation of Aristotle, it also fails to consider that knowledge of things other than God is also necessary for the perfection of the human intellect.[128] What these "other things" are he does not immediately say, but one might surmise that Suárez has in mind something like substance, unity, causality, identity, difference, et cetera. All of these, while crucial for knowledge of God, are not limited in scope only to the divine being but cut across the entire spectrum of being. Suárez, without yet using the term, seems to be on the cusp of acknowledging that the adequate object of metaphysics must be truly 'transcendental.' I shall return to this claim in a moment.

Suárez further offers an a priori consideration that undermines S_3. Given the fact that human knowledge proceeds discursively, it does not immediately attain God *in se*, but only attains a (natural) knowledge of God's existence through creation.[129] Here, one might take note of Suárez's distinction between supernatural theology and natural theology with which he opens his *De divina substantia*. 'Natural theology' (i.e., metaphysics) is able to attain God inasmuch as "the heavens announce the glory of God," which is simply to say that God can be naturally known through creation. What is more, like so many medieval theologians, Suárez holds this intel-

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124 Olivier Boulnois, "Quand commence l'ontothéologie? Aristote, Thomas d'Aquin et Duns Scot," *Revue Thomiste* 95 (1995): 85-86.

125 Édouard-Henri Wéber, "Eckhart et l'ontothéologie: histoire et conditions d'une rupture," in *Maître Eckhart à Paris, Une critique médiévale de l'ontothéologie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1984), 80.

126 Alain de Libera, *La Philosophie médiévale* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1989), 72-73.

127 Cross, "Where Angels Fear to Tread," 26.

128 *DM* 1.1.11.

129 Ibid.

lectual commitment on account of his Christian faith. After all, Saint Paul's claim guarantees that the invisible things of God can be known by the things that God has made, that is, creatures (Rom 1:20).[130] But if God can be known *naturally* through creation, it can only be under the (a priori) condition that some common character (*ratio*) obtains between God and creature so that the human intellect can pass from knowledge of the one (creation) to knowledge of the other (God). As such, God is rightly said to be "contained in the object of this science as the primary and chief object, not, however, as its adequate object."[131]

Yet, in placing God under a more common object (viz., the *ratio entis*), does not Suárez prioritize being itself over God and thus fall prey to onto-theology, as Heidegger, Marion, and Milbank construe it? Cross points out that that there is a great deal of muddied thinking regarding what is philosophically at stake in the negative assessment of onto-theology, on the one hand, and, on the other, the philosophical determinations actually at play not only in Suárez's work but also that of Duns Scotus.[132] The controversy turns upon what kind of "priority" is meant. S_3, as we have seen, claims that to reduce God only to the primary object of metaphysics constitutes 'Being' as "naturally prior" to both God and creature. As the contemporary critics of onto-theology see it, this "natural priority" means that God is really or metaphysically dependent upon 'Being,' which S_3 uncontroversially holds cannot be the case, "for nothing can by nature be prior to God."[133] For his part, Suárez agrees; the kind of priority he advances is not a priority of 'nature' or 'causality.' Rather, what he has in mind is a priority "in the universality of predication," which is to say a 'conceptual' priority.[134] It remains the case that "every nature [*ratio*], however abstract, is common to God and to creature, and is thus compared to God, as not able to exist really unless in God, or dependently upon God, and therefore it cannot be [*esse*] by nature prior to God."[135] Suárez certainly does not hold that God is *metaphysically* dependent upon Being or that God is just one being among many others, for God remains "more distant from any creature, than they are among themselves."[136] He denies, then, the inference from 'conceptual priority'

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130 *De divina substantia*, prooem. Cf. Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 2, a. 2, sed contra.

131 *DM* 1.1.11 (vol. 25, 5): "Unde constat recte dictum esse, tractando fundamentum superioris sententiae, Deum contineri sub objecto hujus scientiae ut primum ac praecipuum objectum, non tamen ut adaequatum."

132 Cross, "Scotus and Suárez at the Origins of Modernity," 72-74.

133 *DM* 1.1.9 (vol. 25, 5): "… sed nihil potest esse prius natura Deo…."

134 Ibid. 1.1.13 (vol. 25, 6): "… possunt dari aliqui conceptus secundum rationem priores Deo in universalitate praedicationis; haec autem non est prioritas naturae, nec causalitatis, ut per se constat, nec ratione independentiae seu prioritatis in subsistendo…."

135 Ibid. (vol. 25, 6): "… nam omnis ratio, quantumvis abstrahatur communis Deo et creaturis, ita comparator ad Deum, ut existere non possit in rerum natura, nisi in ipsomet Deo, vel dependenter a Deo, et ideo non potest esse prior natura ipsomet Deo."

136 Ibid., 1.1.13 (vol. 25, 6): "… in suo esse, et secundum se magis distet a creatura qualibet, quam ipsae inter se…."

to 'metaphysical priority.' In fact, as already noted and as we shall see further in Chapter Five, being itself pertains first to God and derivatively or secondarily to creatures. There is no neutral or indifferent concept of being that hovers over, so to speak, God and creature as a Platonic Form.

Indeed, it is true that the demands of Suárez's Christian faith make it necessary that there should be some conceptual agreement between God and creature on account of which the divine being can be known. The same concern is evident in Thomas Aquinas's rejection of Moses Maimonides's thesis that all predications between God and creature are purely equivocal. If God and creature were only equivocally related, Thomas warns, nothing whatsoever could be known about God.[137] On Suárez's view, it is not repugnant to God's infinite transcendence that the divine being could be known in terms of the 'concept of being,' which only expresses the imperfect similitude that obtains between God and creature.[138] Cross marks an important distinction: "claiming that something falls under the extension of a concept—*being*—is very different from claiming that God somehow requires Being for his existence, as it were."[139]

Nevertheless, could not Milbank easily argue that, at the very least, in allowing a conceptual priority over God, Suárez, like Scotus, generates "for the first time ontotheological idolatry regarding God"?[140] That is to say, is not Suárez advancing—as Marion would put it—'conceptual idolatry'? The problem with such conceptual idolatry consists in the autonomous character that it enjoys as both preceding and grounding theology. Conceding such an autonomy would do away with the ancillary metaphysics that someone, such as Thomas Aquinas, holds is critical in preserving the transcendent and irreducibly diverse divinity of God.[141] For Milbank, Thomas's espousal of metaphysics as an ancillary science, "means that the domain of metaphysics is not simply subordinate to, but completely *evacuated* by theology, for metaphysics refers its subject matter—Being—wholesale to a first principle, God…."[142] Yet, as God is the subject of theology, metaphysics remains ancillary—and thus subsequent—to theology. Milbank alleges that this order is entirely reversed for Scotus and Suárez, who both genuflect before the conceptual idol of 'Being.'

Still, it is not at all clear that this is what Suárez (as well as Scotus for that matter) has actually done. To claim that God is 'dependent' upon the concept of being is not to sug-

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137 See Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 13, a.5.

138 I shall discuss Suárez's understanding of the nature of the 'concept of being' in the following chapter.

139 Cross, "Scotus and Suárez at the Origins of Modernity," 72.

140 Milbank, *The Word Made Strange: Theology, Language, Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 44.

141 Franco Volipi's emphasis upon the different ways that Thomas Aquinas and Suárez relate God to metaphysics is typical. See his "Suarez et le problème de la métaphysiques," *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* 98 (1993): 395-411.

142 Milbank, *The Word Made Strange*, 44.

gest, as noted, that God is *metaphysically* dependent upon that concept for existence. Rather, the claim is that it is one's *knowledge* of God that is "somehow dependent on conceptually prior knowledge unproblematically derived from creatures."[143] But that knowledge is what Suárez's (biblical) faith assures him to be possible (Romans 1:20), and, moreover, the same holds for Thomas Aquinas, whose metaphysics Milbank views as salutary.[144] For the Dominican, just as much as for the Jesuit, natural knowledge of God is not *per se nota* and must therefore be demonstrated;[145] and the only point of departure for such a demonstration can be the knowledge of creatures.[146] Epistemological dependence upon creation does not elevate the creature to the status of God or reduce God to the status of a creature. Conceptual dependence pertains instead to the manner in which the human intellect starts from what is better known to it (though less known in itself) and moves to that which is, as of yet, unknown (although in itself it is preeminently knowable). For this reason, Aristotle tells us, "as the eyes of bats are to the blaze of day, so is the reason in our soul to the things which are by nature most evident of all."[147] This confession of epistemic limitation is far from idolatry.

The upshot of these considerations is that Suárez thinks it impossible for God to be the adequate object of metaphysics, for the reason that knowledge of the divine would remain naturally inaccessible to the human intellect. As already indicated, knowledge of God could be assured only if there were some concept or *ratio* common to God and creature that would allow the human intellect to move from creature to God. Such a *ratio*, however, must be something truly 'transcendent,' so as to allow the shift from creation to God. Admittedly, Suárez does not use the terms 'transcendent' or 'transcendental' in the passages just addressed, nevertheless, as the *Disputationes metaphysicae* progresses, the determinations Suárez makes regarding the character of being reveal its transcendental character.[148] What is more, in his rejection of S_5—which we shall momentarily consider—Suárez is explicit about the transcendental character (*ratio*) of being. It is this same transcendental perspective that leads him to reject S_4, which argues that immaterial substance (i.e., both God and the intelligences) is the adequate object of metaphysics. S_4 establishes its claim on the basis of the division of the sciences. Since Aristotle says that there are as many parts of philosophy as there are substances, it would seem that immaterial substance, which no natural science studies, should be treated in its own proper science. What is more, since substance is twofold (viz., material and immaterial), so likewise will the sciences that consider them be twofold. For this

143 Cross, "Scotus and Suárez at the Origins of Modernity," 74.

144 See, e.g., Thomas, *De Trinitate*, q. 5, a. 4; idem, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 2, a. 2.

145 I might add, here, that the same is true of Duns Scotus as well. See his *Ordinatio* I, d. 2, pars 1, q. 1-2, nn. 39-40.

146 See Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 2, a. 2.

147 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 2.1.993b10.

148 Gracia, "Suárez's Conception of Metaphysics: A Step in the Direction of Mentalism?" 295.

reason, Aristotle himself had argued that, were there no immaterial substances, physics, which considers material beings, would be first philosophy.

Like S_3, S_4 offers a reductive account of the adequate object of metaphysics. Nevertheless, Suárez concedes that S_4 is correct to maintain that immaterial substance most definitely (*maxime*) pertains to the object of metaphysics and that, of all other beings, none besides immaterial being falls per se and according to its own proper character under the object of metaphysics.[149] Suárez objects, for S_4 does not rightly demonstrate that immaterial substance is the *exclusive* object of metaphysics for the reason that there are yet certain characters (*rationes*) that are more common and more universal, which properly pertain to metaphysics's examination.

> In immaterial substances themselves there can be considered other characters [*rationes*] or more universal and common objective concepts that some science can treat according to an adequate character [*ratio*], for proper principles and properties correspond to these characters [*rationibus*].[150]

What are these "more common and more universal objective concepts"? Again, the text does not say, but I suggest that, for Suárez, it is nothing other than being and the properties or attributes of being, which is to say, the transcendentals. Were it not for being's transcendental or common character, he argues, knowledge of immaterial substances could not be attained in the first place. "Natural human science can only attain [knowledge] of immaterial substances by beginning with characters [*rationibus*] that are common to those [immaterial] substances and to other things [i.e., material things]."[151]

Suárez's point remains constant: the character of being is such that it is truly common and universal, which has the salutary effect of generating a metaphysical community apt to be treated by a single science. What remains implicit in Suárez's argumentation thus far—viz., the transcendental character of metaphysics—emerges much more explicitly in his rejection of the remaining two theses: S_5 and S_6.

Before taking up Suárez's rejection of those two theses, I should make some comment about the issue that his *Tractatus de Anima* passage raises concerning metaphysics's abstracting from mobile being or matter. If it is the case that metaphysics abstracts from all matter *secundum esse* as the Aristotelian tradition has held and which Suárez himself notes,[152] then how is it not the case that metaphysics has immaterial being as its adequate object? We have already seen the incipient transcendental reasoning involved in Suárez's rejection of such a notion, but what remains to be understood is his account of the abstraction from matter as it pertains to metaphysics.

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149 *DM* 1.1.15.

150 Ibid., 1.1.15 (vol. 25, 7): "… quia in ipsa immateriali substantia considerari possunt aliae rationes, seu conceptus objectivi universaliores et communiores, de quibus secundum adaequatam rationem potest aliqua scientia tradi, nam his respondent propria principia et proprietates…."

151 Ibid., 1.1.17 (vol. 25, 8): "… quia scientia humana et naturalis vix potest attingere substantias immateriales, nisi incipiendo a rationibus que communes sint illis substantiis, et aliis rebus."

152 See *DM* 1.1.14.

Suárez offers an understanding of abstraction in terms of precision (*praecisio*), which focuses on a particular *ratio* of something that leaves whatever falls outside of that *ratio* out of consideration, but—also important to note—without rejecting it. He says, for example, that natural being (*ens naturale*) or, what is the same, material substance is said to be the adequate object of (natural) philosophy, but in abstracting with precision 'material substance,' the lower characters (*rationes inferiores*) of corruptible and incorruptible, though left out of consideration, are not expressly rejected. The same holds for metaphysics. While metaphysics considers being insofar as it is being, Suárez does not mean that the proper characters (*rationes*) of particular beings are excluded. Rather, those lower (*inferiora*) *rationes*—presumably also those beings that are material—are included,[153] but they are not expressly considered. Suárez's reason for this claim is to allow a theoretical space for other speculative sciences (viz., mathematics and physics) to operate. Each of these sciences considers that which is real and agree in that they are abstractive, but the kind of abstraction with which they operate varies. Unlike mathematics and physics, which consider their adequate objects in terms of their materiality, metaphysics abstracts from all matter not only according to reason but also according to being (*secundum esse*).[154] The complete abstraction from matter follows from the transcendental conception of being latently operative behind Suárez's metaphysical strategy. If the character of being (*ratio entis*) is found in things without matter,[155] the question we must consider is whether it is found *only* within those things, that is to say, only within immaterial substances.

Suárez holds that the *ratio entis* is not in fact restricted to immaterial substance. Here, he takes Thomas Aquinas as a precedent. In Thomas's own determination of whether '*scientia divina*' considers that which exists separately from matter and motion, he has occasion to mark a difference between two ways in which something can be so separated. It can either (a) be of such a nature (e.g., God or the intelligences) that it never exists in matter, or (b) it does not necessarily exist in matter although, at times, it does enjoy material existence. For his part, Thomas takes advantage of this distinction to accommodate the Aristotelian theological interpretation of metaphysics, while advancing his own thesis that metaphysics has as its proper subject 'being insofar as it is being' (*ens in quantum est ens*). Though such being does not have materiality in its proper *ratio*, it is not repugnant for such being to be realized in material circumstances.[156]

Suárez capitalizes upon that same distinction. To be considered precisely in terms of being it is sufficient that something should not include matter in its formal

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153 *DM* 1.2.12. I shall discuss more fully Suárez's understanding of precision as it relates to the concept of being in the succeeding chapter.

154 Ibid., 1.2.13.

155 Ibid.

156 Thomas, *In Boetium de Trinitate*, q. 5, a. 4.

ratio. Moreover, since such *rationes* would be knowable and have both proper and adequate objects, it pertains to no other science than metaphysics to consider that *ratio*, which is simply the transcendental *ratio entis*.[157] But, again, given Suárez's notion of precision, though the *ratio* of matter is not contained in the *ratio entis*, matter is not positively and expressly excluded from the metaphysician's gaze. As Darge puts it, "within the context of the determination of the subject of metaphysics, this *ratio* [*entis*] is not conceived formally by a complete abstraction from the particular forms of being, but is attained by a sort of total abstraction, as a potential whole that somehow includes these inferior forms."[158] While the scope of physics is limited to a particular focus on material or mobile being, metaphysics's scope is not so limited since it considers what transcends material limitations. Yet, since Suárez's understanding of 'transcendence' is immanent,[159] in transcending material being, metaphysics does not thereby exclude it. It cannot be the case, then, that metaphysics has as its adequate object immaterial substance.

2.2 Finite Being

The final two theses, as was the case with S_3 and S_4, are also too restrictive but in the opposite direction. S_5 holds that being as it is divided among the ten categories forms the adequate object of metaphysics,[160] while S_6 holds that only substance as such constitutes metaphysics's adequate object.[161] Suárez points out that there are two possible interpretations of S_5. One interpretation, $S_{5.1}$, excludes God from the adequate object of metaphysics and holds that only finite immaterial substances together with their accidents—all of which are located within the categories—form the adequate object. Nevertheless, God is not entirely eliminated from consideration since the divine being is attained as the first cause of categorial being. Suárez attributes this opinion to Dominic of Flanders, but, as Aertsen rightly contends, $S_{5.1}$ seems to be wholly commensurate with Thomas Aquinas's own position.[162] In his Commentaries on Boethius's *De Trinitate* and on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Thomas is clear: only *ens commune* forms the proper subject matter of 'natural theology' (i.e., metaphysics) from which God is excluded. But, since every science seeks to attain the principles and causes of its object,[163] Thomas thinks that God—the ultimate cause of *ens commune*—is reached at the conclusion of metaphysics but does not fall under its subject.[164]

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157 *DM* 1.2.14.

158 Darge, "Suárez on the Subject of Metaphysics," 107-108.

159 I shall explain more fully what 'immanent' means for Suárez in the next two chapters.

160 *DM* 1.1.18.

161 Ibid., 1.1.21.

162 Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 593.

163 See, e.g., Aristotle *Physics* 1.1.184a9–11.

164 See Thomas, *Super Boetium de Trinitate*, q. 5, a. 4; idem, *In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis expositio*, prooem.

S_5 is open to a second interpretation: $S_{5.2}$. According to $S_{5.2}$, all immaterial substances—not just God—are excluded from the adequate object of metaphysics, which is just being (*esse*) as it is divided among the ten categories. $S_{5.2}$ appeals to the authority of Aristotle, who identifies 'being *qua* being' as the subject of metaphysics in *Metaphysics* book four and then divides being among the categories in book five. Thomas Aquinas is also cited as a proponent of $S_{5.2}$ insofar as he holds that "God and the intelligences are considered by metaphysics as the principles and causes of its object, but not as its parts."[165]

Suárez thinks that S_5, according to either interpretation, is simply false. There is no basis for $S_{5.2}$'s exclusion of immaterial substances from the categories, which, says Suárez, surely have some agreement with lower things, whether that agreement be generic or specific. Moreover, it is entirely irrelevant to a science whether its object can be located within a category, for a science is concerned with whether or not "a thing exists."[166] For the same reason, $S_{5.2}$ illegitimately excludes God from the adequate object. Here, as Suárez points out, one need only adduce the arguments of S_3 and S_4 to infer God's containment within the object of metaphysics. "For God is an object that is in some way naturally knowable (and the same is always understood to be said of the other intelligences); therefore [God] can fall under some natural science, not only as an extrinsic principle, but also as its chief object."[167] Suárez thereby concludes that metaphysics "considers things and first and most universal causes, and the most general first principles, which include God Himself, as well as *something can either be or not be*, and the like."[168] Even the divine attributes, he thinks, fall under the scope of this science. As in his rejection of S_3 and S_4, Suárez appeals to certain "most universal" characters or features that constitute the adequate object of metaphysics. Finally, making explicit what I have suggested to be the case, Suárez identifies these universal characters or considerations of metaphysics precisely as transcendental. Arguing that Aristotle's division of being into the categories has nothing to do with establishing the adequate object of metaphysics, Suárez explains:

> For if that division is understood of what is only and directly placed in the categories, it is thus evident that this division is not of being [*ens*] in terms of being the adequate object of this science, since that [object] not only includes that which is directly contained in the categories, but also other *transcendental* and analogous characters [*rationes*], such as that of accidents, of forms, and the like, and also the differences of beings [*entium*].[169]

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165 *DM* 1.1.18 (vol. 25, 8): "Addunt etiam D. Thomae testimonium, qui interdum docet, Deum et intelligentias considerari a metaphysico ut principia et causas sui objecti, non ut partes ejus."

166 Ibid., 1.1.19.

167 Ibid. (vol. 25, 9): "Nam Deus est objectum naturaliter scibile aliquo modo (idemque semper de caeteris intelligentiis dictum intelligatur); ergo potest cadere sub aliquam naturalem scientiam, non solum ut principium extrinsecum, sed etiam ut objectum praecipuum…."

168 Ibid. (vol. 25, 9): "… considerat da [sic] rebus et causis primis et univeralissimis, et de primis principiis generalissimis, quae Deum ipsum comprehendunt, ut *Quodlibet est vel non est*, et similibus…."

169 Ibid., 1.1.20 (vol. 25, 9): "… nam si illa divisio intelligatur de his quae directe tantum in praedicamento collocantur, sic constat divisum ejus non esse ens, prout est adaequatum objectum hujus

There is hardly a clearer passage in the opening section of *DM* 1 that manifests Suárez's transcendental conception of metaphysics. S_5 is inadequate because it fails to take into account the full scope of being in terms of its transcendentality. S_6, which Suárez attributes to John Buridan, also fails to give sufficient recognition of the transcendental character of being. More restrictive than S_5, S_6 holds that substance as such—abstracting from materiality or immateriality as well as from finitude and infinitude—is the adequate object of metaphysics.[170] Since substance is being *simpliciter* and all accidents are simply the properties of substance, it follows that metaphysics will have substance as its adequate object and demonstrate the accidents that follow thereupon.

Suárez's response to this thesis is hardly surprising given what we have already seen. It is the task of a science to demonstrate the properties following from its object, which S_6 thinks are accidents following upon substance. Suárez argues, however, that, prior to accidents, the metaphysician is able to demonstrate more universal attributes of a substance. Again, Suárez is explicit about the transcendentality of these *rationes*, which he identifies as unity, truth, and goodness. What is more, we cannot demonstrate that accidents are "adequate attributes," that is to say, that which follows of necessity from substance being a substance, since there exists a certain substance—God—that cannot have any accidents.[171] Nevertheless, it is proper to say that the transcendental attributes of being can rightly be attributed to God and all beings, which is why metaphysics is the most universal science. Accordingly, if metaphysics considers accidents, which Suárez grants, it does not do so simply in terms of their being the properties of substance, but rather under the more universal perspective of their participating in the transcendental character (*ratio*) and properties of being (*ens*).[172]

3. Being as Transcendent

After having rejected the previous six theses, Suárez finally articulates his own position, which emerges, in part, as a consequence of his foregoing critiques. Simply put: "It must be said, therefore, that being insofar as it is real being [*ens in quantum ens reale* = EER] is the adequate object of this science."[173] He thinks that the object of metaphysics is being taken in its complete latitude (EAS), consonant with S_1; however, he identifies EAS with EER from which he has excluded both *entia rationis*

scientiae, nam illud non solum complectitur entia, quae in praedicamentis directe collocantur, sed etiam alias rationes *transcendentales* et analogas, ut accidentis, formae, et similes, atque etiam differentias entium" (emphasis mine).

[170] Ibid., 1.1.21.

[171] Ibid., 1.1.24.

[172] Ibid., 1.1.25.

[173] Ibid., 1.1.26 (vol. 25, 11): "Dicendum est ergo, ens in quantum ens reale esse objectum adaequatum hujus scientiae."

and *entia per accidens*. His emphasis is on the *realist* character of being. What is more, Suárez clearly identifies what falls under the scope of EAS when considered from a realist perspective:

> For it is shown that the adequate object of this science should include God, and other immaterial substances, but not only those. It should include not only substances, but also real accidents, not however beings of reason, and [that being] which is entirely *per accidens*. But an object of this sort should be nothing other than being as such [*ens ut sic*]; therefore that [i.e., being as such] is the adequate object.[174]

While the full existential import of Suárez's conception of 'real being' will be addressed in the following chapter, I think that even within this passage, given what falls under the scope of EAS, it is reasonably clear that 'real being' is construed in terms of some reference to existence. Beings of reason and being *per accidens* lack such an existential reference, and so they are not *real* (being) and thus fall outside the scope of metaphysics. Yet, is this passage also sufficient to establish that Suárez's metaphysical vision of being is transcendent? Suárez's transcendental *explicatio entis* remains to be treated in a later chapter, but, for the time being, we cannot fail to notice that his rejection of S_3 through S_6 is, by and large, due to their insufficient attention to the transcendental character of EER. What is more, in responding to two objections against his own thesis, Suárez makes clear that he intends to frame his metaphysical project in terms of transcendentality.

As noted throughout the present chapter, Suárez is especially attuned to satisfying the scientific requirements for metaphysics. Following Aristotle, he explains that each science has a twofold task: it must (α) demonstrate the properties that necessarily follow from its object, and it must (β) attain the principles and causes of that object. Accordingly, if metaphysics is truly a science—a non-negotiable claim for Suárez—it must (to satisfy α) demonstrate the properties that follow upon EER and (to satisfy β) investigate the causes or principles of EER.[175] If, however, it should be the case that the satisfaction of either α or β is impeded, the scientific status of metaphysics would be undermined. Yet, according to an objection that Suárez addresses, it is precisely the transcendental conception of being that makes the satisfaction of α and β impossible.

The reason that α is frustrated follows from the fact that EER cannot have any properties; EER has no properties because, given the transcendental character of being, being would be essentially included within any putative property of EER,

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[174] Ibid. (vol. 25, 11): "Ostensum est enim, objectum adaequatum hujus scientiae debere comprehendere Deum, et alias substantias immateriales, non tamen solas illas. Item debere comprehendere non tantum substantias, sed etiam accidentia realia, non tamen entia rationis, et omnino per accidens; sed hujusmodi objectum nullum aliud esse potest praeter ens ut sic; ergo illud est objectum adaequatum."

[175] Ibid., 1.1.27.

which Suárez himself admits.[176] But if being is included within the properties of EER, then, precisely insofar as they are being, those properties are not distinct from EER. As the objection points out, however, "a subject cannot be of the essence of its properties."[177] The problem here pertains to the intension of being with respect to EER.[178] If being is included within the intension of EER's properties, then the task of α is otiose. The transcendental character of EER only begets identity when what is required for science is a distinction between a scientific object and its properties.

It also seems that β fares no better than α. Just as EER cannot be said to have any properties, it cannot in any way be said to have a cause or set of causes. The reason for this is that if one were to suggest that EER as such has a cause, then anything that falls under its extension would itself be caused with respect to its being. As Suárez points out, God falls under EER, and, needless to say, the claim that God should have a cause is metaphysically absurd and strikes the Christian theologian as thoroughly untenable.[179] The problem confronting Suárez's transcendental conception is that being is too common to serve as the object of any science. Jorge Gracia sums up the difficulty these objections pose as follows: "Any analysis of being, whether intensional or causal, would involve circularity because being extends, both intensionally and extensionally, to everything."[180]

At this point, it seems that Suárez has at least three options. He can (i) reject that metaphysics is a science; (ii) reconstruct the nature of a science to accommodate the conclusions of his own thesis with respect to metaphysics; or (iii) he can nuance what is required for a science so that both α and β can be accommodated in his metaphysical theory. Needless to say, (i) is out of the question and runs contrary to Suárez's express commitments as articulated thus far within his *Disputationes metaphysicae*. Also, (ii) would be extraordinarily cumbersome and push Suárez away from the nearly universal tradition that preceded him and which understood metaphysics to comport itself to the demands of an Aristotelian science. His preference is for (iii). Suárez confronts the challenges involved in satisfying α and β and,

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176 Ibid., 2.5.16 (vol. 25, 97): "… ens, in quantum ens, intrinsice includi in omni ente, et in omni conceptu positivae differentiae, aut modi entis realis."

177 Ibid., 1.1.27 (vol. 25, 11): "… subjectum non potest esse de essentia suae proprietatis."

178 Gracia, "Suárez's Conception of Metaphysics," 294.

179 *DM* 1.1.27.

180 Gracia, "Suárez's Conception of Metaphysics," 294. I might point out that these are challenges not only for Suárez but also for Aristotle himself. As Roberto Poli notes, there is a certain ambiguity within the Aristotelian texts regarding the subject of what modern-day philosophers call 'ontology.' Is it the case that 'the theory of being' and 'the theory of being *qua* being' are the same? If so, what is the purpose of the reduplicative '*qua*'? The problem comes about, Poli suggests, because of "Aristotle's opinion that the analysis of being *simpliciter* cannot be developed in a scientific fashion." Poli, "*Qua*-Theories," in *Shapes and Forms: From Gestalt Psychology and Phenomenology to Ontology and Mathematics*, ed. Liliana Albertazzi (Dordrecht: Springer, 1999), quote at 245. Maintaining a metaphysics that is true to the Aristotelian notion of a science remains a persistent challenge for Suárez, as we shall come to see.

in the process, reaffirms the transcendental character of metaphysics as the very condition for the possibility of that science in the first place.

In particular, Suárez does not question the role that a science plays in demonstrating the properties that follow upon its object; in fact, he affirms this role.[181] With respect to α, it is one thing to argue that a difference is needed between an object and its properties, but it is another thing to argue that such a difference should be real or intrinsic. The difficulty regarding the identity of being and its properties is not unique to Suárez but confronts any thinker who regards being as contained within its own differences or as convertible with its transcendental attributes. Thomas Aquinas, for example, maintains a similar transcendental point of view when he explains that "any nature whatsoever is essentially being."[182] This viewpoint stands in marked contrast to Duns Scotus's transcendental theory, which identifies a distinction *ex natura rei* between being (*ens*) and its intrinsic modes, through which the former is contracted to the categories or even to its transcendental determinations. Scotus is clear: 'being' is not predicated *in quid* of its differences.[183] Given the distinction between being and its properties, there is room within the Scotistic metaphysics for the realization of α.

Those thinkers operating from a different transcendental perspective, namely, Aquinas and Suárez, must employ a different tactic to ensure the satisfaction of α. A solution can be found within the text of Aristotle himself. In the fourth book of his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle explains that there is a real identity between 'being' (τὸ ὄν) and 'unity' (τὸ ἓν) since they agree in "one and the same nature" (μία φύσις).[184] Nevertheless, such agreement does not impede their conceptual distinction, for each has its own account (λόγος). In *DM* 3, where Suárez offers a much more explicit and elaborate account of his transcendental theory, he virtually echoes Aristotle. The attributes of being, insofar as they are real, are identical but "distinguished by reason."[185] What is more, these conceptual differences emerge from our limited human conceptualization which grasps being inadequately.[186] Put another way, while the properties of being fall under the extension of being, being and its properties remain intensionally distinct.[187] The reasoning involved in Suárez's explicit transcendental theory is very intricate, and I shall consider it more carefully in Chapter Three. But the rudiments of that theory are already at play in Suárez's response to the abovementioned objection, which serves as the "baseline of the solution"

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181 *DM* 3.proem.

182 Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, vol. 22.2, 5): "… quaelibet natura est essentialiter ens…."

183 See Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 3, n. 131.

184 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 4.2.1003b22-23.

185 *DM* 3.1.6 (vol. 25, 104): "… optime enim fieri potest ut sint realia, quamvis non re, sed ratione distinguantur…."

186 Ibid. Cf. Darge, "Suárez on the Subject of Metaphysics," 104.

187 Gracia, "Suárez's Conception of Metaphysics," 294-95.

offered later in the *DM* 3.[188] For Suárez, it is enough that there should be only some *conceptual* distinction—rather than a more robust *real* distinction—between being and its properties in order to accommodate α.[189]

Suárez turns to a conceptual distinction once again to overcome the second part of the objection (viz., what pertains to ensuring β) regarding a science's explanation of its object in terms of principles or causes. To meet the objection, Suárez points out that principles are of two kinds: some are complex or composite (P_1) while some are simple (P_2). P_1 are epistemic principles ("*principia cognitionis*") and function as propositions from which demonstrations can be made. P_2, however, are metaphysical principles ("*principia essendi*") and play the role of middle terms in the context of a demonstration.[190] For Suárez, metaphysics will chiefly be concerned with P_2. He further subdivides P_2 into those principles that are really distinct from their effects ($P_{2.1}$) and those principles that are not ($P_{2.2}$). Gracia suggests that Suárez identifies $P_{2.1}$ as causes.[191] While this is true, Suárez's use of the term 'cause' is not as restrictive as Gracia implies since $P_{2.2}$ are also described as 'causes.'[192] Be that as it may, important for Suárez's purposes is the fact that $P_{2.2}$ are only conceptually—as opposed to really—distinct from their objects. Metaphysics cannot pursue principles that are really distinct from EER (i.e., $P_{2.1}$) but that does not impede β since it is still possible to attain $P_{2.2}$ with respect to EER. For example, though God—who, again, falls under the extension of EER–does not have any causes in the sense of $P_{2.1}$, certain attributes can be demonstrated of the divine being. From the infinite perfection of God, for example, one can determine why God can only be one. The divine unity is nothing really other than the divine being, nevertheless, the two are conceptually distinct and so unity can be demonstrated of God's being. For Suárez, then, the scientific character of metaphysics does not necessarily demand that it pursue principles or causes really distinct from its object ($P_{2.1}$). For β, as for α, it is only necessary that some conceptual distinction be found between the principle ($P_{2.2}$) and its object (EER) in order for metaphysics to realize its scientific vocation.[193]

4. Conclusion

Given the foregoing considerations, I think it is reasonable to interpret Suárez's conception of metaphysics as both realist and transcendental. We have also seen intimations of the existential and analogical character of being emerge from his argument for what constitutes the object of metaphysics. I grant that the full character

188 See Darge, "Suárez on the Subject of Metaphysics," 101.

189 *DM* 1.1.28.

190 Gracia, "Suárez's Conception of Metaphysics," 290.

191 Ibid.

192 See *DM* 1.1.29 (vol. 25, 12): "Alio modo dicitur principium [$P_{2.2}$] seu causa, id quod est ratio alterius, secundum quod objective concipiuntur et distinguuntur…."

193 Ibid. Cf. Gracia, "Suárez's Conception of Metaphysics," 294-95.

and structure of such a metaphysical vision remains to be articulated and further defended, but the rudiments are in place. Gracia correctly holds (with respect to the opening section of the first disputation): "If Suárez had said nothing else about the nature of metaphysics and its object than what has been presented in summary form so far, he could have been interpreted only as having a realistic conception of metaphysics, albeit a somewhat different one from those that preceded him."[194]

From what we have seen in Suárez's rejection of S_1 and S_2, there is clear concern for the realist character of being. Though he has only hinted at what constitutes being as 'real' and at times identifies it with 'true being,'[195] a being is 'real,' as I have pointed out, precisely because it exists or has an aptitude to existence. The justification for this claim will be offered in the following chapters. Nevertheless, insofar as Suárez insists that beings of reason and being *per accidens* do not fall under the adequate object of metaphysics, the role that existence plays in his metaphysical thought cannot easily be put aside. The lack of direct intelligibility for beings of reason further illustrates this point. As we have seen, only real being is intelligible per se. If beings of reason can be known at all, it is only indirectly and through that which actually exists: real being. The fact that Suárez identifies cognoscibility as a function of real being (i.e., that which exists) rather than being as a function of cognoscibility, further establishes his metaphysical vision as realist and ultimately existential.

Moreover, given his rejection of S_3 through S_6, it can only be the case that it is real being in its complete latitude that captures the gaze of the metaphysician. It will not do to exclude anything *real* from metaphysics, whether it be God, the intelligences, material substances, or even accidents. But, if being according to its complete amplitude serves as the adequate object of metaphysics, then the viewpoint that the metaphysician adopts must transcend any strictly categorial conception of being. If the thesis is deficient which holds that only God or substance alone is the adequate object of metaphysics, it is because there is a yet more common or universal consideration of being to be had. Being presents itself in terms of a transcendental structure. As Honnefelder holds, metaphysics for both Scotus and Suárez is a transcendental science because it concerns itself with the *ratio entis* "and only that."[196] Does this mean, then, that, as Honnefelder also suggests, Suárez follows the Scotistic conception of metaphysics in its basic lines more than that of any other author?[197] Insofar as Suárez identifies the *ratio entis* as the transcendental, adequate object of metaphysics, he seems to be approximating the thought of

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194 Gracia, "Suárez's Conception of Metaphysics," 295.

195 See n. 62 supra.

196 Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens*, 209: "Wie bei einer Wissenschaft, die diese ratio zum Gegenstand hat, nicht anders zu erwarten, ist Metaphysik daher fur beide Autoren [i.e., Scotus und Suárez] Transzendentalwissenschaft und nur das."

197 Ibid.: "… Suárez in den Grundlinien dem scotischen Konzept folgt…."

Scotus more so than that of other medieval thinkers such as Albertus Magnus or Thomas Aquinas. For both Albertus and Thomas, metaphysics is restricted to *ens commune*, whereas Suárez's focus is clearly on the transcendental *rationes* that follow upon being as such.[198] Nevertheless, even if Scotus and Suárez agree that metaphysics is fundamentally a *scientia transcendens*, it is problematic to stress that agreement excessively for the basic reason that the two authors have diverse transcendental theories. Indeed, as Darge has shown, Suárez's "transcendental interpretation of being constitutes a novelty in the history of scholastic transcendental science." As such, it is "irreducible" to the transcendental theories of the "Thomists, Scotists, and the nominalists."[199] What is more, the difference in that transcendental theory has direct implications for Suárez's doctrine of being and, likewise, the nature of metaphysics itself. Being's very existential character that not only determines it as 'real' but is also the reason for its transcendentality. This can be seen much more clearly in the subsequent disputations, to which I now turn.

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[198] For Albertus Magnus see *Metaphysica*, 1.1.2; cf. also Timothy Noone, "St. Albert on the Subject of Metaphysics and Demonstrating the Existence of God," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 2 (1992): 31-52. For Thomas see *In Boetium de Trinitate*, q. 5, a. 4.

[199] Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 404: "… Suárez' Entwurf der transzendentalen Seinsauslegung ein Novum in der Geschichte der scholastischen Transzendalwissenschaft bildet, das dem Typ nach eigenständig und irreduzibel neben den Entwürfen des thomistischen, scotischen und des nominalistischen Typs besteht."

Chapter Two

Being and Existence

In the previous chapter I argued that Suárez's metaphysics, insofar as it concerns itself with *ens in quantum ens reale*, is realist. I also intimated that the realist character results from being's order to existence. In the present chapter, I narrow and develop further my claim that Suárez's doctrine of being turns upon an order to existence (*ordo ad esse*), such that the Suárezian metaphysics can rightly be called 'existential.'

As indicated in the Introduction, there has been a tendency to view Suárez's metaphysics as essentialistic or as merely a matter of logical possibility. On such a view, being is regarded as completely indifferent to existence. As I see it, there are two main reasons for this interpretive tendency, and they have to do with Suárez's own approach to the question of being. First, Suárez frames his discussion of the *ratio entis* in terms of the objective concept of being (*conceptus objectivus entis*). Insofar as he turns to a *concept*, it would seem that the Jesuit turns away from that which is real or the extramental towards the thinkable. Second, Suárez identifies the objective concept of being as that which has a 'real essence.' When he explains what he means by a 'real essence,' he does so in terms of the Avicennian quidditative framework that shaped the metaphysical perspectives of many medieval thinkers including Henry of Ghent and Duns Scotus. The quidditative structure of being that Avicenna develops, moreover, is one wherein existence is regarded as accidental and entirely irrelevant to an essence, which has its own being. It would seem, then, that Suárez is content to tread along the same existentially-inert path of essence as Avicenna.

Nevertheless, I believe that interpretations motivated by these two concerns are wrongheaded. If Suárez uses the Avicennian tradition, as in fact he does, it is for the purpose of articulating something radically non-Avicennian, namely, an existential account of being that is reducible neither to the possible being constitutive of an Avicennian essence taken *secundum se* nor to logical possibility with no remainder. In differentiating Suárez's account of being from that of Avicenna, one would do well to bear in mind that Suárez is no parrot or undisciplined eclectic. If he adopts many of the metaphysical principles and insights of Avicenna and Duns Scotus, it is only after submitting their theses to sustained critique and restructuring. Those theses are deconstructed and rebuilt around an order or reference to existence, one that had been absent in Avicenna.

1. Formal and Objective Concepts

Suárez renders his most explicit and prolonged treatment of the *ratio entis* in *DM* 2. In the course of his discussion, Suárez introduces two crucial distinctions that form the backdrop to nearly all subsequent metaphysical discussions: namely, (1) the distinction between (1.1) formal and (1.2) objective concepts, and (2) the distinction between (2.1) being taken as a participle and (2.2) being taken as a noun. These distinctions are not unique to Suárez, as he himself acknowledges, and, in fact, had been utilized since at least the time of Johannes Capreolus (c. 1380–1444).[1] With respect to the first distinction, Suárez explains that a formal concept is that act itself or the mental word (*verbum*) by which some thing (*res*) or common character (*ratio*) is conceived.[2] An objective concept, in contrast, is that very thing itself (*res illa*) or character (*ratio*) that is immediately and properly known through the formal concept. To use Suárez's own example, when a human being is conceived, the (mental) act that the intellect produces is the formal concept, but that which is known—the human being—is the objective concept.[3] We might say, then, that the objective concept terminates or brings to completion the intellect's intending.[4]

As noted above, framing his discussion in terms of 'concepts' has caused some interpretive disagreements regarding the nature of the Suárezian metaphysical project and its portrayal of being. Turning to a *concept* of being would seem to buck the realist trajectory originally plotted in *DM* 1.1. Owing to the fact that he speaks of the "concept of being" (*conceptus entis*), some have accused Suárez of embracing a form of 'mentalism,'[5] which Jorge Gracia defines as "the view which holds that the objects metaphysics studies are some kind of intramental entities, such as concepts, ideas, mental images, mental representations, and so on."[6] Yet, since an objective concept

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[1] *DM* 2.1.1 (vol. 25, 64): "Supponenda imprimis est vulgaris distinctio…." Suárez's older Jesuit confrere, Pedro da Fonseca, marks these same distinctions in his Commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. See Fonseca, *In libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis Stagirita* (Cologne, 1615), lib. 4, c. 2, q. 1, sec. 1: "*Conceptus formalis nihil est aliud, quam actualis similitudo rei, quae intelligitur, ab intellectu ad eam exprimendam producta*." Cf. Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought: From Philip the Chancellor (ca. 1225) to Francisco Suárez* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 595, who also shows the connection between this distinction and Petrus Auriol.

[2] Ibid., 2.1.1.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Dubarle, for example, argues that Suárez's metaphysics is both "representationalist" and perfectly characterized by Hegel's "metaphysics of the understanding." See R.P.D. Dubarle, "Intervention," *Archives de Philosophie* 42 (1979): 274 and the following who also ascribe a certain form of representationalism to Suárez's account of being: José Aleu Benitez, "Juicio y objetivación en Suárez," *Pensamiento* 26 (1970): 397-418; Olivier Boulnois, *Être et représentation: Une généalogie de la métaphysique moderne à l'époque de Duns Scot (XIIIe-XIVe)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999), 479-93.

[6] Gracia, "Suárez and Metaphysical Mentalism: The Last Visit," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 67 (1993): 349.

is not necessarily an intramental reality, as we shall see in what soon follows, it is not the case that Suárez's metaphysics takes a step in a mentalist direction.[7]

Let us consider what Suárez himself says about the nature of formal and objective concepts as well as what constitutes their distinction. As an intrinsic quality of the intellect, a formal concept is always some positive and true thing. Objective concepts, however, need not always be such, for they can be negations (e.g., $\neg p$), privations (e.g., blindness), or beings of reason (e.g., a *hircocervus*) in addition to real beings (e.g., Socrates). Moreover, insofar as it is a quality of the mind, a formal concept is always something individual. Objective concepts too can be individual things (e.g., this or that person), but they can also be universals (e.g., second intentions).[8] If an objective concept can be a real being, a being of reason, or a universal, then with which or what kind of objective concept is metaphysics concerned? Suárez answers: "In this disputation, we especially intend to examine the objective concept of being as such, according to its total abstraction and according to what we have said is the proper object of metaphysics…."[9]

Admittedly, Suárez's response here may very well raise more questions than it provides answers. Is metaphysics concerned with the objective concept of being precisely insofar as it is an objective concept or is it concerned only with a particular objective concept (or even a determinate set of objective concepts)? If the former is the case, one might construe metaphysics in terms of what all objective concepts have in common. But what can the real (i.e., a particular being), the ideal

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[7] Nevertheless, as I discuss in Chapter Three, Gracia does accuse Suárez of mentalism with respect to the Jesuit's understanding of the transcendental attributes of being, which pertain, he alleges, more to the way in which we think than to the intrinsic structures of being. See Gracia, "Suárez and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals," *Topoi* II (1992): 121-33; idem, "The Transcendental Attributes of Being in Scholasticism and Modernity: Suárez and Kant," in eds., Jan Aertsen and Andreas Speer, *Was ist Philosophie im Mittelalter?* (Berlin: Walter der Gruyter, 1998): 213-25.

[8] *DM* 2.1.1. While the notions of privations and negations are, most likely, familiar to contemporary readers, discussions of beings of reason and second intentions border on being technical terms for late scholastic authors. There is wide disagreement among the scholastics regarding the exact nature of a being of reason, but I believe it is fairly non-controversial to say that a being of reason has no extramental correlate and has its entire reality only from the intellect's operation. A second intention, similarly, is the result of the intellect's reflection on its own acts of conception. (Suárez also considers them a kind of being of reason. See *DM* 54.3.) In considering the individual person 'Socrates' one can consider 'Socrates' in terms of several distinct concepts, for example, 'man,' 'animal,' 'living thing,' etc. These latter concepts are understood as second intentions because now the primary or first intentional object, Socrates, is considered indirectly in terms of intellect's reflection on terms that only have intentional existence. That is, 'man' can further be resolved into the concepts 'rational' and 'animal,' wherein 'animal' is understood as a genus and 'rational' as a specific difference. For a discussion of first and second intentions, see Joseph Owens, *An Elementary Christian Metaphysics* (Houston, TX: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1985), 234-47. For a discussion of various late scholastic thoughts regarding beings of reason, see Daniel Novotný, Ens rationis *from Suárez to Caramuel: A Study in Scholasticism of the Baroque Era* (Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2013).

[9] Ibid. (vol. 25, 65): "In hac ergo disputatione, praecipue intendimus explicare conceptum objectivum entis ut sic, secundum totam abstractionem suam, secundum quam diximus esse metaphysicae objectum…."

(i.e., a being of reason), and the nil (i.e., a privation or negation) have in common if not cognoscibility? If cognoscibility is the common denominator, then interpreters such as Jean-François Courtine and Olivier Boulnois may well be correct in their claims that Suárez forsakes a realist metaphysics in favor of a supertranscendental conception of being constructed in terms of the thinkable. Suárez would then truly be tilling the metaphysical soil from which Kant's *Gegenstand überhaupt* would eventually germinate.[10] What is more, if the objective concept of being is, as Suárez says, considered "according to its total *abstraction*," it would appear that he is content to unharness metaphysics from any realist—and therefore existential—tether that could moor it to anything beyond what is merely thinkable.

Neverthless, characterizing Suárez's metaphysics as supertranscendental seems at the very least incongruous with *DM* 1.1.6 and *DM* 1.1.26 where he claims that *entia rationis* are excluded from metaphysics. For reasons I shall soon adduce, I do not believe that Suárez's appeal to an objective *concept* of being warrants a supertranscendental interpretation. Metaphysics is not so much concerned with objective concepts per se, but only with a determinate objective concept, namely, the objective concept of being. Just as Suárez excluded *entia rationis* from the subject of metaphysics,[11] so too does he exclude them from the objective concept of being.[12] Does this mean that *ens in quantum ens reale* (i.e., the subject of metaphysics) is just the same as the objective concept of being? Suárez's interpreters do not answer this question uniformly as can be seen from the debate between Norman Wells and Jorge Gracia on this topic.[13]

In the course of that debate, Wells complains that Gracia creates a straw man when the latter states that some interpreters hold that, according to Suárez, the objective concept is neither an intramental reality (i.e., a formal concept) nor the being of an extramental thing (*res*). Rather, they think that Suárez regards the objective concept as an intermediate reality. Gracia identifies that interpretive trend in order to argue that it is actually inconsistent with Suárez's own teaching that "objective concepts have the same ontological status as their objects."[14] If Gracia is correct, then the claim that Suárez's appeal to objective concepts renders his metaphysics supertranscendental or mentalist is undermined. The implications of Gracia's interpretation are not insignificant. If Suárez's metaphysics is not mentalist, then it must

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[10] See Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, esp. 424-25. Cf. Courtine, "Le projet Suaréziene de la métaphysique: pour une étude de la these suaréziene du néant," *Archives de Philosophie* 42 (1979): 238-39. Boulnois, *Être et représentation*, 479-82.

[11] *DM* 2.1.1

[12] Ibid., 54.1.10.

[13] See Gracia, "Suárez's Conception of Metaphysics: A Step in the Direction of Mentalism?" *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 65 (1991): 287-309; Wells, "*Esse Cognitum* and Suárez Revisited," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 67 (1993): 339-48; Gracia, "Suárez and Metaphysical Mentalism: The Last Visit," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 67 (1993): 349-54.

[14] Gracia, "Suárez's Conception of Metaphysics," 305.

be predicated upon the concrete structures of extramental reality since between the mental and the real there is no middle ground.

For his part, Wells insists that he himself has never encountered an interpretation that regards the objective concept as enjoying an intermediate status. Wells's claim is bewildering for two reasons.

First, undeniably there are in fact interpreters who maintain precisely what Gracia has noted. For example, Timothy Cronin, well known for his work on objective being in late scholasticism, has said that, for Suárez, the objective concept serves as a medium "between the intellect and existing things."[15] This is not an isolated claim, for he also states that, according to Suárez, "Betwixt and between the existing sensible thing and the intellect of the existing knower … there is a middle term; it is the objective concept."[16]

Second, and more perplexing, Wells himself appears to countenance the very interpretation he claims has never existed. Beyond the being proper to a formal concept (*esse formale*) and the being of an extramental thing, the objective concept, says Wells, is a kind of "intramental *res*."[17] This intramental *res*, moreover, "is decidedly on the intramental side of the initial twofold distinction … between the formal and objective concepts."[18] Nevertheless, the intramental *res* is distinct from the formal concept for the latter is a mind-dependent, true being that exists as a quality in a subject (i.e., the knower). Does this mean that the intramental *res* is identical with the extramental being of some reality? The contradiction that would result from identifying the *intra*-mental with the *extra*-mental is obvious.[19] Wells, for his part, attempts to clarify the matter by considering what it means for something to be 'in the intellect' or, what is the same, *in ratione* since this is precisely why an intramental *res* is 'intramental.'

While a formal concept and an intramental *res* are both 'in the intellect,' they are so in two different ways. The formal concept is 'in the intellect' *per modum subjecti*, which is to say the intellect is the underlying subject in which the formal concept exists as a quality. In contrast, the intramental *res* is 'in the intellect' *per modum objecti*.[20] The typical example of something existing in the intellect *per modum objecti* is a being of reason. According to Suárez, a being of reason is that which "has objective being [*esse*] only in the intellect, or a being that is thought by

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[15] Timothy Cronin, *Objective Being in Descartes and in Suarez* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1966), 78.

[16] Ibid., 84.

[17] Wells, "*Esse Cognitum* and Suárez Revisited," 341-42.

[18] Ibid., 342.

[19] As it turns out, Wells does in fact seem to suggest such is the case, which Gracia is sure to point out! See Wells, "*Esse Cognitum* and Suárez Revisited," 344; Gracia, "Suarez and Metaphysical Mentalism," 351.

[20] Wells, "*Esse Cognitum* and Suárez Revisited," 343.

reason to be a being [*ens*] even though it does not have any entity in itself."[21] While a being of reason is a quintessential example of an *objectum*, Wells explains that there are other *res cognitae* besides *entia rationis*. This means that something can be an *objectum* in more than one way.[22] If such is the case, what is the metaphysical status of the *esse objectivum* that pertains to that intramental *res* which is distinct from a being of reason? Again, Wells maintains that it cannot be a formal concept, nor can the intramental *res* "be identified with any positive or real *esse* which the *res cognitae* have *in se*."[23] But then what is it? Moreover, if this 'intramental *res*' is neither a formal concept nor an extramental thing, how is it not some medium, as Cronin claims?

To be fair, Wells does not intend to make the claim that the intramental *res* is a medium, yet he only manages to avoid inferring that conclusion on the basis of *nothing*. That is to say, on Wells's reckoning, the objective concept of being turns out to be quite literally nothing. Rather than offer a merely apophatic account of his position, he attempts to explain what an objective concept is in terms of *esse cognitum*. Wells, just as much as John P. Doyle and even Gracia himself, thinks that *esse cognitum* is just synonymous with *esse objectivum*.[24] Once again, we are confronted with the same distinction that was made with respect to *esse objectivum*: namely, *esse cognitum* taken either subjectively or objectively. What is of concern is the latter, which is merely an extrinsic denomination with respect to the thing known (i.e., the *res cognita*). Wells's approach would seem thus far to dovetail nicely with Suárez's own claim that an objective concept is a concept only by "extrinsic denomination."[25] Since *esse cognitum* is (1) a mere extrinsic denomination, (2) posits no being in the thing known, and (3) is not the same as the formal concept, Wells concludes that the objective concept does not form a third thing or reality beyond the formal concept and the being of some extramental reality.[26]

That may all be well and good, but the problem is that in so describing *esse objectivum* Wells has reduced it to the nothingness of a mere extrinsic denomination. Yet, what sense does it make to say that metaphysics is concerned only with extrinsic denominations? Such a claim would destroy the scientific character of metaphysics, which, as a science, investigates the necessary and *intrinsic* properties of its subject. Suárez is clear on that point: "it is the proper office of a science to demonstrate the

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[21] *DM* 54.1.6 (vol. 26, 1016): "… *quod habet esse obiective tantum in intellectu,* seu esse id, *quod a ratione cogitatur ut ens, cum tamen in se entitatem non habeat*." Cf. ibid., 54.1.10 (vol. 26, 1018): "… esse obiective tantum in ratione non est esse, sed est cogitari aut fingi."

[22] Wells, "*Esse Cognitum* and Suárez Revisited," 344.

[23] Ibid., 345.

[24] Doyle, *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez*, 167; Wells, "*Esse Cognitum* and Suárez Revisited," 347; Gracia, "Suárez's Conception of Metaphysics," 301. Cf. also Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 589.

[25] *DM* 2.1.1.

[26] Wells, "*Esse Cognitum* and Suárez Revisited," 348.

attributes [*passiones*] of its subject."[27] In a similar vein, Gracia draws a devastating inference from Wells's analysis: "One the one hand, since the objective concept of being is not a being, then metaphysics cannot be said to study being. On the other hand, since the objective concept of being is intramental, then metaphysics must study something mental."[28] In short, either metaphysics is impossible because it has no object, or it is merely a form of mentalism. While a number of interpreters such as Courtine, Dubarle, and Boulnois would be willing to accept the latter conclusion in some form, Wells himself at least sought to avoid a mentalist interpretation.

If metaphysics, for Suárez, is to be realist and avoid mentalism or, as some call it, representationalism,[29] the objective concept that pertains to metaphysics (i.e., the *conceptus objectivus entis*) must be none other than real being itself. Do Suárez's texts allow for such an interpretation? I believe they do.

As already noted, Suárez thinks that the objective concept as it pertains to metaphysics is not really a concept at all but is only so-called by extrinsic denomination.[30] To say that the 'objective concept' is called a 'concept' by extrinsic denomination, however, is not the same as to say that the objective concept is itself an extrinsic denomination. Could it be that, when it comes to metaphysics, the objective concept is something intrinsically real? If such is the case, then the Suárezian conception of being would remain tethered to the really existent and eschew a mentalist or representationalist character. Suárez himself points in a realist direction when he says with respect to metaphysics, "we do not treat of signs themselves, but of the thing signified, nor of the formal concept but of the objective concept."[31]

Despite Wells's efforts to clarify what constitutes the nature of the intramental *res*, he leaves his reader somewhat perplexed. The confusion is due partly to Suárez himself who, as I have already said, is not as clear as one might hope. Nevertheless, we can begin to make positive sense of just what the objective concept of being is if we turn to Suárez's account of *esse objectivum*. He addresses the nature of *esse objectivum* in the context of explaining the nature of *entia rationis*. Holding such a discussion of *esse objectivum* within that particular context, while ineluctable, is nevertheless infelicitous insofar as it appears to frame the discussion in terms of mental entities, which lends credence to mentalist interpretations. A being of reason, says Suárez, "indicates a relation to reason."[32] As a relation, a being of reason

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[27] *DM* 3.proem. (vol. 25, 102): "…proprium munus scientiae est passiones de suo subject demonstrare."

[28] Gracia, "Suárez and Metaphysical Mentalism," 353.

[29] See, e.g., Boulnois, *Être et répresentation*, 7-16, esp. 10. Boulnois associates '*répresentation*' with a "new interpretation" of metaphysics understood in terms of the "unity of the concept of being." As such, it corresponds to the "birth" of metaphysics as "unified, autonomous, and transcendental science."

[30] *DM* 2.1.1.

[31] Ibid., 29.3.34 (vol. 26, 59): "… non tractamus de signis ipsis, sed de re significata, nec de conceptibus formalibus, sed de objectivis…."

[32] Ibid., 54.1.5 (vol. 26, 1016): "… ens rationis… habitudinem dicat ad rationem…."

involves (1) reason itself and (2) some other (relative) term: the object. Yet, there are many different relations to reason, meaning that there are numerous kinds of *entia rationis* or objects.[33]

In the most technical sense of the term (i.e., according to the common scholastic usage), something is a being of reason because it is only in reason *per modum objecti*.[34] Important here is the observation that, for Suárez, a being of reason is not a being of reason precisely because it is an object. Rather, something is a being of reason because "it only has *esse objectivum* in the intellect" or since "it is thought as a being [*ens*] by the intellect although it has no entity in itself."[35] A being of reason lacks all real being and is considered only *as if* it were real being, which is to say a being of reason can only be an object of thought. To say that a being of reason is *only* an object of thought is entirely distinct from claiming that what can be an object of thought can *only* be an object and nothing real in itself. One cannot, however, correctly conclude that an object of thought can only be a being of reason or some other intramental reality. To reduce *esse objectivum* entirely to the status of a mental entity because it is an object would be to suggest—mistakenly in my view—that an object as it is in itself is always something that is purely mental. While this might be true of some objects (e.g., privations, negations, and beings of reason), it cannot be true of all objects and therefore of objectivity in general. Were it the case that objectivity is exclusively proper to mental entities, one would then be committed to the claim that nothing extramental could ever be known. Knowledge of the world as it is in itself would be rendered impossible. While a number of early modern philosophers (e.g., Hume, Locke, and Kant) might be content with the idea that what one directly knows is not extramental reality but a concept, idea, or phenomenal presentation, such a notion is entirely foreign to Suárez's own realist doctrine.

Operating within the broad Aristotelian tradition, Suárez holds that the formal concept functions as a medium through which one knows some object. If that object is a universal, a privation, or a negation—none of which have any extramental reality—then the metaphysical status of the objective concept (i.e., that which is known) would itself be merely mental. In such cases, the objective concepts enjoy only *esse objectivum*. What is essential for something's being an *ens rationis*, however, is not that it has *esse objectivum* but that it *only* has *esse objectivum*, that is, a being of reason lacks real being. Something does not lack real being, however, just because it enjoys *esse objectivum*. Suárez is clear: *esse objectivum* in no way precludes something from "being able to have in itself true and real being [*esse*] according to which

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[33] Ibid. For a helpful discussion of beings of reason within late scholasticism including Suárez, see Daniel Novotný, Ens rationis *from Suárez to Caramuel: A Study in Scholasticism of the Baroque Era* (Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2013).

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid., 54.1.6 (vol. 26, 1016): "… ens rationis, esse illud, *quod habet esse objective tantum in intellectu*, seu esse id, *quod a ratione cogitatur ut ens, cum tamen in se entitatem non habeat*."

it is an object to reason; and this is absolutely and simply not a true being of reason, but real [being]."[36] While all beings of reason have *esse objectivum*, not everything that has *esse objectivum* is a being of reason.[37]

The upshot of these considerations is that whatever has real being (*esse verum*) can also be an object.[38] Accordingly, if what is known by means of the formal concept is some real extramental reality, then the objective concept is just that extramental entity itself and construed in terms of that which is existential rather than mental. With these distinctions in place regarding what pertains to an objective concept, we can return to our original question: for Suárez, what or which objective concept will be the principle object of metaphysics? His answer, as already indicated, is simply the objective concept of *being*. Is the objective concept of being mental, real, or some combination of the two? Suárez gives us an answer when he excludes *entia rationis* from the objective concept of being.[39] There is not a conceptual community between real being and beings of reason, he says, but only a nominal community.[40] One must conclude, then, that in the Suárezian metaphysics the objective concept of being is just real being itself.[41] This interpretation, moreover, has the benefit of being consistent with what Suárez established in *DM* 1.1.

Still, Suárez does speak of the objective concept of being in terms of its "total abstraction" as the proper object of metaphysics.[42] Does that suggest that he is in fact moving away from a consideration of extramental reality towards a mentalist framework? The answer to this question turns upon what Suárez means by 'abstraction' in the present context.

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36 *DM* 54.1.6 (vol. 26, 1016): "Id autem, quod sic est objective in mente, interdum habet, vel potest habere in se verum esse reale, secundum quod rationi objicitur, et hoc absolute et simpliciter non est verum ens rationis, sed reale…."

37 Cf. *DM* 6.7.2.

38 *DM* 54.1.6.

39 Ibid., 54.1.10.

40 Ibid., 54.1.9.

41 Again, I must stress that framing his discussion in terms of formal and objective concepts is nothing unique to Suárez nor does it signal the inauguration of a new approach to being cast in terms of the 'thinkable.' Indeed, the distinction between formal and objective concepts, as indicated above in n. 1, was already in place with Capreolus and Cajetan. Marco Forlivesi traces the origin of this distinction further to certain antecedents within the Middle Ages. See Forlivesi, "La distinction entre concept formel et concept objectif: Suárez, Pasqualigo, Mastri," *Les Études Philosophiques* 60 (2002): 3-30. Nacent forms of the distinction can be found in the thought of Thomas Aquinas, Pierre d'Auvergne, and Petrus de Alvernia, to name a few. The discussions that gave birth to the distinction between formal and objective concepts had to do with how various medieval and post-medieval thinkers came to terms with the notion of intentionality and the sundry dynamics involved therein. Forlivesi holds that Suárez himself was not entirely clear on what constitutes the nature of an objective concept as such. For that reason there are aspects within the Suárezian account that lend support equally to the interpretations of both Wells and Gracia. Yet, as Forlivesi sees it, both Wells and Gracia fail to appreciate the degree to which Suárez manages to overcome naïve realism as well as the degree to which naïve realism is still present within the Jesuit's thought. To this I would point out that, whatever the conclusions of the interpretive analysis at issue, what cannot be overlooked is the fact that Suárez, at the very least, remains embedded within a *realist* framework.

42 *DM* 2.1.1.

The nature of abstraction or, as it was also called during and after Suárez's time, precision was a particularly thorny topic within late scholasticism, especially among those thinkers following in the wake of the *Doctor eximius*. The British Jesuit Thomas Compton Carleton (1592–1666) notes that the debate between objective and formal precision was, for the schools, that "Phrygian knot" with which all struggled in their defense of either realism or nominalism.[43] For his part, Suárez was, by and large, unconcerned with the debates that pitted nominalists against realists. What is more, he never framed his discussion of abstraction or precision in terms of formal or objective precisions. Nevertheless, important distinctions need to be made here since the term 'precision' has a meaning used by other thinkers, such as Thomas Aquinas, that is much narrower in meaning that it is for Suárez. Suárez's thinking on the matter can helpfully be illuminated with a distinction between two kinds of abstraction that Aquinas identifies in his *De ente et essentia*, namely, precisive and non-precisive abstraction.[44] Whereas non-precisive abstraction attains a whole from a whole, precisive abstraction only obtains a formal part from a whole. Take, for example, the difference between 'animal' and 'animality' or the difference between 'body' and 'corporeality' respectively. Both 'animality' and 'corporeality,' attained through precisive abstraction, pertain only to that aspect of an animal or of a body in terms of which it is an animal or a body. Deliberately excluded from such considerations are any other formalities (*rationes*) that happen to determine further the objects in question. For example, in considering a lion, one can consider either (1) that *ratio* in virtue of which a lion is an animal and nothing more (i.e., 'animality') or (2) one can consider the lion as falling under a certain genus 'animal,' which genus remains open to further specific determinations.

In the first (1) instance (viz., precisive abstraction), the formality 'animality' is attained as that in virtue of which something is an animal. Any other additional determining formalities (*rationes*), such as those that would, for example, make the animal a lion, a zebra, or an elephant, are deliberately excluded or "cut off" (i.e., *cum*

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[43] See Thomas Compton Carleton, *Philosophia universa*, Ex logica, disp. 24, proem. (Antwerp, 1649: 97): "Nulla celebrior hodie, quam de Praecisionibus, in scholis quaestio; nulla, maiore vel argumentorum, vel animorum contentione disputata, quasi ut ille olim *nodus*, Phyrgiae, ita hic Philosophiae fatum foret. Acris igitur instituitur disceptatio, strenue inter se concertantibus utriusque partis auctoribus summaque vi a conatu, et suae stabilire fundamenta sententiae, et alterius convellere contendentibus. Quam nos partem sequuturi simus, huius decursu disputationis constabit." For discussions of this debate see Daniel Heider, *Universals in Second Scholasticism: A Comparative Study with Focus on the Theories of Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548–1617), João Poinsot, O.P. (1589–1644) and Bartolomeo Mastri da Meldola O.F.M. Conv. (1602–1673)/Bonaventura Belluto O.F.M. Conv. (1600–1676)* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2014), as well as Sven Knebel, who frames the parameters of the debate in his "*Distinctio Rationis Ratiocinatis*: Die scholastische Unterscheidungslehre vor dem Satz »A=A«," *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 44 (2002): 145-73. See also Claus Anderson, "Intuitive and Abstractive Cognition, 'Praecisiones Obiectivae,' and the Formal Distinction in Mastri and Belluto and Late Scotist Authors," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 108 (2015): 183-247 and also Victor M. Salas, "Rodrigo de Arriaga, S.J. (1592–1667) on Analogy and the Concept of Being," *Res Philosophica* 96 (2019): 91-111.

[44] Thomas, *De ente et essentia*, c. 2. Cf. *Summa theologiae* I, q. 3, a. 3.

praecisione) from one's abstraction since none of the aforementioned is an animal precisely insofar as it is a specific kind of animal. Thomas explains, "if animal only named a certain thing which has such a perfection as to be able to sense and to move through a principle existing in it, by prescinding from any another perfection, then whatever higher perfection it would have would come to animal according to the mode of an addition and not as implicitly contained in the nature of animal."[45] For this reason (i.e., 'animality' being only a formal part), one cannot predicate the part of a whole. It would be absurd to say 'The lion is animality.' Rather, one should say that 'the lion has animality' or, similarly, that 'Socrates has humanity.'[46] This is to suggest that, over and above 'animality,' the lion has additional determining *rationes* or individuating features. Yet, as already indicated, those *rationes* are prescinded from, which is to say they are excluded from consideration.

In the second (2), non-precisive sense of abstraction one abstracts a whole from a whole. To return to the lion example, 'animal' can be abstracted as a genus, that is, as indifferent to any further determining or specifying difference. Non-precisive abstraction, in contrast, while not focused on various extraneous or accidental characteristics, does not exclude them.[47] What results here, as already mentioned, is the abstraction of a whole from a whole. Thus, it is proper to say 'Socrates is a human being' and 'Socrates is an animal.' Neither 'human being' as a species nor 'animal' as a genus when attained through non-precisive abstraction precludes the additional individual differences that constitute Socrates as such (e.g., his height, weight, qualities, etc.). Accordingly, when 'animal' is abstracted with non-precision, while one's focus is on that character in virtue of which something is an animal, other determining features are not deliberately excluded or rejected.

These considerations are important in light of the fact that Gilson has argued that, in Suárez's account of being, the Jesuit deliberately excludes any consideration of existence.[48] Indeed, Suárez himself seems to say as much, "for being [*ens*] taken as a noun signifies that which has a real essence prescinding from actual existence." I shall address what Suárez means by 'being taken as a noun' shortly, but, for now, what must be pointed out—something that Gilson leaves out of consideration—is that Suárez immediately adds that, in prescinding from existence, existence "is not in fact excluded or denied, but only precisively abstracted."[49] In other words,

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[45] Ibid., c. 2 (ed. Leonine, vol. 43, 372): "Si enim animal nominaret tantum rem quandam que habet talem perfectionem ut possit sentire et moueri per principium in ipso existens, cum precisione alterius perfectionis, tunc quecumque alia perfectio ulterior superueniret haberet se ad animal per modum compartis, et non sicut implicite contenta in ratione animalis…."

[46] Ibid.

[47] Thomas Aquinas, *De ente et essentia*, c. 2. Cf. Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 3, a. 3.

[48] Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1952), 105.

[49] *DM* 2.4.9 (vol. 25, 93): "… *ens* enim in vi nominis sumptum significat id quod habet essentiam realem praescindendo ab actuali existentia, non quidem excludendo illam seu negando, sed praecisive tantum abstrahendo…."

in the present context we see that Suárez does not regard 'precision' in the same restrictive sense as does Thomas Aquinas. Rather, he uses it in the broader sense of what Thomas calls non-precisive abstraction, which is why he can argue in support of his existential commitment that being (*ens*) cannot be understood without an order to existence (*sine ordine ad esse*) even though it prescinds from existence.[50] Existence remains the determining factor for Suárez's metaphysical speculations. Nevertheless, given Gilson's tendency to measure all metaphysical thought by the yardstick of existential Thomism—wherein precision excludes or brackets out that which does not fall under its consideration—the essentialistic interpretation to which he subjects Suárez is as inevitable as it is inaccurate.

2. The Unity of the Concept of Being

What should be evident by now is that, in turning to an objective concept of being, Suárez is not countenancing a mentalist metaphysics, one that would undermine the realist trajectory he established in *DM* 1.1. Worthy of note, however, is the methodological approach he takes in developing his account of the objective concept of being. "Since [knowing the objective concept] is very difficult, and depends much upon our conception, we begin from the formal concept, which, as it seems to us, can be more known."[51] According to José Pereira, this strategy signals what will eventually become a revolution in metaphysics. "[N]ever before in Scholasticism had extra-mental reality [i.e., the objective concept] been made dependent for its truth upon an intra-mental concept [i.e., the formal concept]."[52] Pereira, I believe, somewhat overstates the matter. Nowhere does Suárez suggest that some extra-mental reality or truth-value is dependent—either metaphysically or epistemologically—upon our intra-mental concepts. Rather, beginning with what is better known to us and moving to what is prior in itself, is just the order of discovery that Suárez elsewhere recommends as proper to philosophical methodology in line with what Aristotle himself teaches.[53] What is more, as most realist metaphysicians stretching back to Parmenides maintain, there is a proportional relation between being and thought.[54] If one can begin with the formal concept and move to the objective

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[50] Ibid., 2.4.14.

[51] Ibid., 2.1.1 (vol. 25, 65): "… quia vero est valde difficilis, multumque pendens ex conceptione nostra, initium sumimus a conceptu formali, qui, ut nobis videtur, notior esse potest."

[52] Pereira, *Suárez*, 139.

[53] See *DM* 25.proem. Cf. Aristotle, *Physics* 1.1.184a16-21. See also Thomas Aquinas, *De ente et essentia*, c. 1 where he begins with an investigation of essence in composite substances, which is more knowable to us, in order to move to a consideration of essence in simple substances which, though prior in themselves, are more remote to us.

[54] Herman Diels and Walther Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker: Griechisch und Deutsch* (Berlin, Weidmannsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1951), vol. 1, 231: "… τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστίν τε καὶ εἶναι" (Fr. 3:22). Cf. also Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 5, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, vol. 4, 58): "Primo autem in conceptione intellectus cadit ens, quia secundum hoc unumquodque cognoscibile est, inquantum est actu…."

concept, it is because, at least for Suárez, there is a one-to-one correspondence or proportion among the formal concept, objective concept, and the voice (*vox*) expressing them. Suárez is confident that: "[O]ne can often argue from the one to the other, not indeed so as to commit a vicious circle, but so as to take from each one that which is more known to us, or from other things seen to be easier."[55]

Suárez correlates the formal and objective concepts of being with one another to establish their unity since every Aristotelian science—including metaphysics—must have a sufficient unity to its subject matter. As we shall presently see, the unity of each concept can be inferred dialectically from the unity of the other, according to the order of discovery or what is better known. The unity of the concept, moreover, is of particular concern since a scientific demonstration, which Suárez along with the Aristotelian tradition aimed to supply, requires an evenly distributed middle term lest it should succumb to the fallacy of equivocation.[56] Indeed, it was this demand for unity, after all, that motivated Duns Scotus to defend the univocal concept of being.[57] Likewise this same demand for unity is behind Suárez's commitment to preserving the unity of the concept (both formal and objective) of being. In order to secure a unified subject matter, the objective concept of being must be one. To establish the unity of the objective concept of being, Suárez establishes the unity of the formal concept of being. Since the formal and objective concepts of being, as he sees it, have a one-to-one correspondence, if the formal concept of being enjoys a fundamental unity, so too will the objective concept of being.[58] To establish that unity, Suárez offers a number of arguments: some are based on experience,[59] others on Aristotle's teachings,[60] and still others on the concept of existence (*ex conceptu existentiae*).[61] Given the present Chapter's goal of establishing the existential character of Suárez's metaphysics, I focus on this last set of arguments. We shall see how the Jesuit is able to infer the unity of the objective concept of being on the basis of the unity of the formal concept of being.

Suárez thinks it is evident that only one formal concept of existence (*existentiae*) as such is given. As often as one speaks of or thinks about existence, it is as if only about one act. In considering various beings insofar as they exist, existence itself

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55 *DM* 2.2.24 (vol. 25, 78): "Haec enim tria, *conceptus formalis*, *objectivus*, et *vox*, proportionem inter se servant, et ideo ab uno ad aliud saepe argumentamur, non quidem vitiosum circulum committendo, sed de unoquoque sumendo quod nobis notius, aut ab aliis facilius concessum videtur."

56 See Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 1.7.

57 Cf. Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 1-2, n. 26. Given the necessity for a univocal middle term, some interpreters, such as Richard Cross, have gone so far as to suggest that Thomas Aquinas's metaphysics and theology, because they claim to be scientific in character but reject univocity, fundamentally succumb to the fallacy of equivocation. See Cross, *Duns Scotus*, Great Medieval Thinkers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 35-39.

58 *DM* 2.2.8.

59 Ibid., 2.2.9.

60 Ibid., 2.1.9.

61 Ibid.

is not construed by means of a plurality of mental acts or by diverse concepts. The consideration of several beings according to their distinct and proper natures would yield a multiplicity of concepts corresponding to those natures. No such multiplicity results when one considers beings simply in terms of their existence since existence is conceived as an abstract unity.[62] This observation coincides with Suárez's argument for the unity of the concept of being (*conceptus entis*). When one hears the name 'being' (*ens*), one's mental consideration is not divided or dispersed into a plurality of distinct concepts but drawn into only one concept. Likewise, when one thinks the concept of 'human being' or 'animal,' a plurality of distinct human beings or animals is not considered.[63] Thus, if the concept of being consists in an existential aptitude, as Suárez here suggests, that concept has the same unity as the concept of existence. But being is, as we shall see, derived from an order to existence. Therefore, Suárez concludes that not only is the concept of being one, it is also most simple (*simplicissimus*) since it is that concept into which all other concepts, through which we conceive such-or-such kind of being (*tale vel tale ens*), are reduced.[64]

To one formal concept of being there corresponds, Suárez says, one adequate and objective concept of being. "[The] formal concept is an act of the intellect; but every act of the intellect, just as for every act, should have some adequate object, from which it would have unity."[65] This adequate object—the objective concept of being—expresses neither substance, accident, God, nor creatures, but all of them confusedly, that is to say, indistinctly and without regard for what specifically makes each nature to be this or that kind of nature. What unites all beings and thereby serves as the unity of the objective concept of being is the similarity that results from diverse beings' agreement in existing (*in essendo*).[66] If metaphysics has being insofar as it is real being as its adequate object and if real beings all agree in existence, then the very object of metaphysics is constituted precisely with respect to existence. This is why Suárez thinks that *entia rationis*, which do not exist *in rerum natura*, fall outside of the metaphysician's (direct) purview.

Suárez advances two arguments to defend his claim that the objective concept of being is one. One thesis follows *ex re ipsa* or a priori and the other *secundum rationem*.[67] Since the first thesis takes into consideration the existential character of being, it is particularly salient for the main argument of this Chapter. Once again, Suárez holds that all real beings truly have some similitude and agreement in existence (*in ratione essendi*) on account of which they stand outside of non-being. Just

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62 Ibid.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.

65 Ibid., 2.2.8 (vol. 25, 72): "… conceptus formalis est actus intellectus; omnis autem actus intellectus, sicut et omnis actus, quatenus unus est, habere debet aliquod objectum adaequatum, a quo habeat unitatem."

66 Ibid.

67 Cf. Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 597-98.

as being and non-being (*ens et non ens*) are fundamentally opposed—from which is derived the first principle that 'anything whatsoever either is or is not' (*quodlibet esse vel non esse*)—so any being whatsoever has some agreement or similitude to any other being whatsoever insofar as it exists. There is, after all, a greater agreement between a substance and an accident, on the one hand, than, on the other, between a substance and non-being or nothing. The reason for that greater agreement is that both the substance and accident exist.[68] As Suárez sees it, all beings whatsoever can be conceived in terms of the *ratio* in which they agree, but that *ratio* is nothing other than existence.[69] Since beings' agreement in existence constitutes the adequate object of metaphysics, it is difficult to make sense of Gilson's claim that Suárez, though not "existence blind," does not know "where existence can fit in such a philosophical interpretation of reality as his own is."[70] Existence does not "fit in" Suárez's interpretation because it is the very condition for the possibility of that interpretation itself. If particular beings' exercise of existence serves as the unifying feature of the *ratio entis*, then we see that, for Suárez, being is not simply an inert essence or static representational concept of the thinkable. Rather, the fundamental meaning of being is to 'stand outside' of nothing, which is just to exist.

3. Existence and Quiddity

Having articulated the relationship between formal and objective concepts as well as having established the unity of the objective concept of being, Suárez is now in a position to give an account of being itself as he understands it. As already stated, metaphysics treats being insofar as it is real being, but the question arises: in virtue of what is being 'real'?[71] To answer that question Suárez first identifies two aspects of being: namely, the existential and the quidditative. He develops his own account of these aspects in conversation with what previous thinkers (such as Avicenna, Thomas Aquinas, and Domingo Soto) had argued.

With respect to the existential aspect, Suárez offers a brief summary of Avicenna's account as well as a description of the terms involved therein.[72] Avicenna recognizes the radical contingency of being (*ens*) since it can be either conferred upon or withdrawn from "all existing things" (i.e., creatures).[73] For this reason, being is

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68 *DM* 2.2.14.

69 Ibid.

70 Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 101-102.

71 *DM* 2.4.1.

72 At this point Suárez seems merely to report Avicenna's position rather than endorse it.

73 The claim that *esse* can be conferred upon 'every existing thing' cannot strictly be the case for Avicenna or even Suárez. For Avicenna, it may be the case that *esse* is accidental to everything that receives its *esse* from another, namely, God, who is just *necesse esse*. But it cannot be the case that *esse* is contingent to *necesse esse*. See Avicenna Latinus, *Liber de philosophia prima sive scientia divina*, ed. S. Van Riet (Louvain-Leiden: E. Peeters-E.J. Brill, 1977), tr. 1, c. 6. Similarly, for Suárez, *esse* is not accidental with respect to God, but essential. See *DM* 2.4.2.

"a certain accident" (*accidens quoddam*).[74] To say that being is an accident does not mean that it is one of the nine predicaments. Rather, 'accident,' when attributed to being, signifies something extra-quidditative. Suárez summarizes Avicenna's doctrine: "Being [*ens*] is thus said formally of *esse* or existence which stands outside the quiddity of a thing [*extra rerum quidditatem*]."[75]

Since Suárez refers to Thomas Aquinas's thinking on this matter, it will be helpful to consider what the Dominican teaches regarding the accidentality of existence. For Thomas, anything that falls outside something's essence can be called 'accidental.'[76] Needless to say, any of the last nine *predicamenta* fit that description, but there is another non-predicamental sense of accidentality as well. Thomas discusses this non-predicamental sense in a quodlibetal question that asks whether an angel is substantially composed of essence and *esse*.[77] Thomas argues for an affirmative answer but immediately confronts the following objection. Given that *esse* pertains only to God as non-accidental, it must be the case that angelic *esse* is accidental. But nothing accidental enters into the substantial composition of something. Therefore, it cannot be the case that angels are composed of essence and *esse*.[78] In response, Thomas explains that since no creature is its own *esse*, created *esse* must indeed fall outside a creature's essence. But anything that falls outside something's essence is 'accidental' in the sense of being contingently related or united to that essence. Angelic *esse* can rightly be called an 'accident' insofar as that *esse* is extra-quidditative. For Thomas, then, to say that *esse* is accidental means that *esse* is "the actuality of a substance."[79]

For his part, Suárez explains the non-predicamental sense of the accidentality of being etymologically. The term *ens* derives from the verb *sum* ('I am' or 'I exist') as its participle. What is more, *sum* properly signifies the 'act of being' (*actus essendi*) or simply the 'act of existing' (*actus existendi*). Therefore, *ens* signifies 'that which is' (*id quod est*) with particular reference to the fact that it is something existing,

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[74] *DM* 2.4.1 For Avicenna see *Liber de philosophia prima sive scientia divina* (S. Van Riet, ed., Louvain-Leiden: E. Peeters-Brill, 1977), tr. 5, c. 2. Thomas Aqiunas usually does not describe *esse* taken as the *actus essendi* as an 'accident,' but he does so on at least one occasion in his *Quaestiones de quodlibet* II, q. 2, a. 1. As I shall make clear, even in that case, Thomas regards the accidentality of *esse* in an atypical fashion. Cf. Suárez, *DM* 2.4.13.

[75] *DM* 2.4.1 (vol. 25, 88): "… dicit ergo ens de formali esse seu existentiam, quae est extra rerum quidditatem."

[76] One may be tempted to describe the accidentality of being in terms of the scholastic notion of *ens per accidens*, which corresponds to the Greek τὸ ὄν κατὰ συμβεβηκός. Cf. Aristotle *Metaphysics* 6.2.1026a33. Yet, such being has no intrinsic identity or unifying structure. Being understood existentially, however, is both intrinsic to whatever reality is in question and is also responsible for that thing's unity. Cf. *DM* 1.1.5.

[77] Thomas, *Quaestiones de quodlibet* II, q. 2, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, vol. 25.2, 214): "… utrum angelus substancialiter sit compositus ex essentia et esse…."

[78] Ibid., obj. 2.

[79] Ibid., ad 2 (ed. Leonine, vol. 25.2, 215): "… esse est accidens, non quasi per accidens se habens, set quasi actualitas cuiuslibet substanciae…."

"for being [*ens*] and that which exists [*existens*] are the same."[80] Since existence, as already noted, is contingent insofar as it can be conferred upon or taken away from something, in signifying existence, *ens* pertains to something other than a thing's quiddity.[81]

Yet, if *ens* identifies that which is extra-quidditative, that quidditative character itself to which existence is contingent still requires metaphysical explanation. To offer such an explanation, Suárez turns to Domingo Soto's distinction between *ens* and *res*. Soto follows Thomas in explaining that *ens* is derived from *sum*, which, again, means that *ens* signifies something precisely insofar as it exists. Hence, *ens* does not pertain to the quiddity of things, or at least not to creatures, since existence is extra-quidditative. That which signifies quiddity is *res*. Suárez reports Soto's position as follows:

> The difference between *ens* and *res* consists is this: *res* is quidditatively predicated since it signifies a true and ratified [*ratam*] quiddity absolutely and without an order to existence [*sine ordine ad esse*]; *ens*, however, is not predicated quidditatively but in terms of the nature of being [*essendi*] or insofar as it can have existence [*esse*].[82]

By introducing the notion of *res*, both Soto and Suárez appeal to a term with a complex history involving diverse metaphysical strands of development. For instance, in claiming that *res* signifies a "ratified" quiddity, Soto harkens to a particular, determinate sense of *res* that distinguishes it from indeterminate meanings that include mere thought-objects. The philosophical history of *res* is too crucial to pass by without comment, for the metaphysical determinations made therein have, as we shall soon see, decisive significance for the manner in which Suárez develops his own doctrine of being. The specificity of Suárez's account can be seen insofar as, unlike Soto, he abolishes the distinction between *ens* and *res* and admits only an etymological difference between the two.[83] Yet, in identifying *ens* with *res*, Suárez, according to Courtine, brings together in an unholy union what had been so "sharply separated" (*séparer nettement*) by Thomists such as Soto and Sylvester Ferrara. Suárez accomplishes a "*coup de force*" with "incalculable consequences,"[84] the chief of which is that he ultimately "strips" any reference to the *actus essendi*

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[80] *DM* 2.4.1 (vol. 25, 88): "… *ens*; derivatur enim a verbo *sum*, estque participium ejus; verbum autem sum, absolute dictum, significat actum essendi, seu existendi… significat ergo adaequate *ens*, id quod est… *id quod est*, id est, quod habet actum essendi seu existendi, ut idem sit ens, quod existens…."

[81] Ibid. I might also point out in passing that the non-predicamental sense of 'accident' corresponds to something's metaphysical contingency and dovetails nicely with Suárez's theological commitment to a creation *ex nihilo*, wherein nothing (apart from God) has the wherewithal to exist *a se*.

[82] Ibid., 2.4.2 (vol. 25, 88): "Et in hoc constituit differentiam inter *ens* et *res*, quod *res* quidditative praedicatur, quia significat quidditatem veram et ratam absolute, et sine ordine ad esse; *ens* autem non praedicatur quidditative, quia non significat absolute quidditatem, sed sub ratione essendi, seu quatenus potest habere esse…."

[83] Ibid., 2.4.15.

[84] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 230.

from being.[85] Whereas Soto and his Thomist confreres sought to distinguish *ens* from *res* so that being could retain an existential import, Suárez's reduction of *ens* to *res* amounts to the elimination of existence (*esse*) from reality (*res*). That is to say, Suárez's identification of *ens* with *res* marks a transition from being understood as *id quod habet esse* to being as *id quod habet essentiam realem*.[86]

Is the existentially bleak account of the Suárezian metaphysics that Courtine offers correct? The answer to that question turns, at least in part, upon what is meant by *res* as Suárez understands it. By the time Suárez addressed the meaning of *res*, it had already been subject to considerable metaphysical development. Centuries prior to Soto, the Latin Avicenna reflected upon the difference between *ens* and *res*, both of which, together with *necessitas*, are "impressed immediately upon the mind by a first impression."[87] *Res* is that which has '*certitudo*,' which Avicenna describes as the stable, definite, and essential structure that "each and every thing has by which it is what it is, just as a triangle has certitude [*habet certitudinem*] by which it is a triangle, and white has certitude [*habet certitudinem*] by which it is white."[88] *Certitudo* is just the *ratio* that a given quidditative structure possesses in virtue of which that structure is identical to itself and distinguished from any other quiddity. Non-quidditative considerations (such as individuality, extra-mental existence or existence in the mind as a universal) are considered 'accidental' in the above-described, non-predicamental sense.[89] In this regard, Avicenna famously remarked that "horseness is only horseness."[90] Yet, if existence is accidental to an essence taken *secundum se*, that essence is not entirely without its own (essential) being or *esse proprie*.[91] What this means is that Avicenna has established a non-existential account of being that follows upon the quidditative and intelligible structures of an essence.

Thomas Aquinas, for his part, rejects the notion that essence taken just as it is in itself, or, as he puts it, "absolutely considered," has any proper being (*esse proprie*).[92] Nevertheless, in the *De ente et essentia* he adopts Avicenna's notion of *certitudo* in the

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85 Ibid., 240.

86 Ibid., 231.

87 Avicenna Latinus, *Liber de philosophia prima sive scientia divina* (S. Van Riet, ed., Louvain-Leiden: E. Peeters-Brill, 1977), tr. 1, c. 5 (31): "… res et ens et necesse talia sunt quod statim imprimuntur in anima prima impressione…."

88 Ibid. (34-35): "… unaquaeque enim res habet certitudinem qua est id quod est, sicut triangulus habet certitudinem quae est triangulus, et albedo habet certitudinem qua est albedo."

89 Ibid. Cf. Avicenna, *Logyca I in Avicennae perhypatetici philosophi: ac medicorum facile primi opera* (ed. Venice, 1508): "Essentie vero rerum sunt in ipsis rebus: aut sunt in intellectu: unde habent tres respectus: unus respectus essentiae est secundum quod ipsa est non relata ad aliquod tertium esse: nec ad id quod sequitur eam secundum quod ipsa est sic. Alius respectus est secundum quod est in his singularibus. Et alius secundum quod est in intellectu" (fol. 2rB).

90 Avicenna Latinus, *Liber de philosophia prima sive scientia divina*, tr. 5, c. 1 (228): "Unde ipsa equinitas non est aliquid nisi equinitas tantum…."

91 As we shall see in Chapter Four, the ontological status of an essence, considered as a mere possible will create difficulties for those who follow along the same trajectory that Avicenna's account of essence establishes.

92 Thomas Aquinas, *De ente et essentia*, c. 3.

midst of articulating the several senses of '*essentia*.' In addition to 'quiddity,' 'nature,' and 'definition,' Thomas says that essence "is also called 'form' [*forma*] according to which through a form the certitude [*certitudo*] of each and everything is signified."[93] Hence, in the transcendental explication of the *ratio entis* that he presents in the *De veritate*, Thomas, citing Avicenna approvingly, points out that, whereas *ens* is taken from the '*actus essendi*,' *res* signifies the quiddity or essence of a thing.[94]

Here, it is important to note that, given the metaphysical context of both the *De ente et essentia* and *De veritate*, *res* is identified in those texts with the real structure of extra-mental being. In the *De ente et essentia* Thomas enquires into the meaning of 'essence' and, after distinguishing between being (*ens*) as it falls under the categories as well as being as the truth of a proposition, limits his metaphysical investigation to being in the categories (i.e., real being) since privations and negations do not have essences.[95] Yet, in his Commentary on the *Sentences* when addressing the question whether sin is a "certain nature," Thomas identifies a broader meaning of *res* than what he presented in the *De veritate*. In one sense, *res* signifies that which has a "ratified [*ratum*] and firm nature."[96] As such, *res* signifies the quiddity or essence of something, which corresponds to Avicenna's notion of *certitudo*. But, Thomas adds that since something is knowable (*cognoscibilis*) through its essence, anything that can be known by the intellect can be called a 'thing' (*res*) in a second sense deriving from the verb *reor, reris* ('I think,' 'you think').[97] With respect to this second sense of *res*, Thomas cites Averroes, who thinks that *res* is greater in extension than *ens*. Unlike *ens*, *res* pertains to "everything that can be conceived by the mind, whether it exists outside the mind or not, such as a *hircocervus* or chimera [i.e., beings of reason]."[98] Thomas also acknowledges that beings of reason, which do not have *ratitudo* or *certitudo* in the first sense of *res*—because they are only negations or privations—can nevertheless be called '*res*' in the sense that derives from *reor, reris*.[99] Though a *hircocervus*, for example, lacks a firm and stable essential structure (i.e., *ratitudo*), it can nevertheless be called a *res* in the sense of *reror reris* since it is at least a thought-object.

The distinction between *res* as *ratum* (R1) and *res* from *reor reris* (R2) plays an important role in the metaphysics that Henry of Ghent subsequently develops. Like Averroes, Henry notes that R2 pertains both to "imaginary things which are

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93 Ibid., c. 1 (ed. Leonine, vol. 43, 369): "Dicitur autem forma, secundum quod per formam significatur certitudo uniuscuiusque rei…."

94 Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 1.

95 Thomas, *De ente et essentia*, c. 1.

96 Thomas, *In II Sent.*, d. 37, q. 1, a. 1 (ed. Madonnet; Paris: Lethielleux, 1929: 944): "Simpliciter enim dicitur res quod habet esse ratum et firmum in natura."

97 Ibid. (944): "Sed quia res per essentiam suam cognoscibilis est, transumptum est nomen rei, ad omne id quod in cognitione vel intellectu cadere potest, secundum quod res a reor reris dicitur…."

98 Averroes, *Epitome in librum Metaphysicae Aristotelis*, tr. 1 (Venice: Juntas, 1562): "… omni re concepta in anima, sive ita se habeat extra anima, sive non ut hircocervus, chimera…." (fol. 359 J).

99 Thomas, *In II Sent.*, d. 37, q. 1, a. 1.

not pure non-being" as well as true things.[100] We might say, then, as do Ludger Honnefelder and Rolf Darge, that R2 is "ontologically indeterminate"[101] and is "left uncertain."[102] It is "indeterminate" or "uncertain" with respect to its ontological status since, in itself, *res* does not immediately indicate whether what it denotes is extra-mental or intra-mental. In a more determinate sense, Henry, with an eye to Avicenna's notion of *certitudo*, holds that any 'thing' (*res*), whether existing or not, that has an exemplar in the divine mind, "is not only said to be *res a reor reris*, but also that it is some nature and essence. And therefore it is called *res a ratitudine*."[103] Two things can be said about Henry's distinctions.

First, what distinguishes R2 from R1 is that the latter has a relation to a divine exemplar (i.e., a divine idea). A being of reason does not have a corresponding divine exemplar and so can never be brought into existence, which is to say, such a 'thing' is an impossible (thought) object. This is important to note since, if it is the case that Suárez's conception of being involves the "ontologically indeterminate" sense of *reor reris* (R2), then Courtine's argument that the Jesuit has transformed metaphysics into a kind of onto-logic will be compelling.[104] Such an onto-logic would consist in the reduction of being to the thinkable or logically possible.[105] Nevertheless, as we shall see, the sense of *res* that Suárez uses to develop his doctrine of being derives from R1, not R2. Does this mean that the Suárezian conception of being follows the same trajectory as Henry's own notion of R1? I shall address that question shortly.

Second, in a fashion similar to Avicenna, Henry holds that R1 enjoys its own being, in his jargon, *esse essentiae*. Unlike Avicenna, however, Henry grounds that being (*esse essentiae*) in the exemplar relationship between an essence and its correlative divine idea. The *esse essentiae* that R1 enjoys is not that on account of which something is said to be or to exist *simpliciter* for "it is not yet *esse existentiae*; but quidditative, which the definition indicates."[106] In other words, Henry postulates a kind of metaphysical limbo that is populated by wraith-like things (R1) that are

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[100] Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibeta* V, q. 2 (Paris, 1518; Nachdruck Louvain, 1961): "… res a reor reris dicta, quae continet sub se rem imaginariam quae est purum non ens…. Et continet sub se rem veram…" (fol. 154rD).

[101] See Darge, *Suarez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 159.

[102] See Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens: Die formale Bestimmung der Seiendheit und Realität in der Metaphysik des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit (Duns Scotus—Suárez—Wolff—Kant—Peirce)* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1990), 33.

[103] Henry, *Quodlibeta* V, q. 2: "Res enim quae cumque sive existens sive non existens, si habet esse in deo secundum exemplaram rationem, non solum dicitur quod est res dicta reor reris: sed etiam quod sit natura & essentia aliqua. Et ideo dicitur res a ratitudine" (fol. 154rD).

[104] Cf. Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, quatrième partie, c. 1.

[105] This is not to suggest that being cannot be thought or that it is not logically coherent. The point is rather that, for Suárez, thinkability or logical possibility alone is not a sufficient criterion for being.

[106] Henry, *Quodlibeta* V, q. 2: "… quod nondum est esse existentiae: sed quidditativum: quod indicat definitio" (fol. 154rD).

neither existents nor entirely nothing.[107] They are not entirely nothing because they have the being of essence (*esse essentiae*). They are not existents either, for God has not (yet) bestowed actuality or *esse existentiae* upon them.[108]

The upshot of Henry's account is that R1 or *ratitudo* is, just like Avicenna's *certitudo*, existentially neutral. What R1 signifies is something's nature or quiddity "simply and absolutely without the condition of existence [*esse*]—whether in the intellect or outside itself—or non-existence [*non esse*]."[109] Henry's quidditative understanding of being has its foundation in the relationship between essences and the divine ideas. Yet, it is the relation to the divine ideas that Duns Scotus finds unacceptable. Scotus insists: "*ratitudo* is no relation—whether it is that by which something is a fixed [*firmum*] being or a true being or a certain [*certum*] being—in any entity whatsoever, since every relation has something in which it is founded, which in itself is not in relation to another."[110] As Scotus sees it, *esse essentiae* compromises the notion of a creation *ex nihilo*.[111] If R1 possesses its own being (*esse essentiae*), then in creating, God is not really producing something out of nothing *simpliciter* but out of something (R1).[112] If not in virtue of a relation to a divine exemplar, as Henry suggests, then in virtue of what is being rendered 'ratified' (*ratum*)? Scotus's answer to this question is as involved as it is subject to scholarly controversy, especially with respect to the question of the ontological status of *ens ratum*.[113] I shall address that controversy to the degree necessary in Chapter Four when discussing Suárez's account of possibility. For now, it is sufficient to sketch Scotus's view regarding *ens ratum* in its most general form to appreciate its influence on Suárez's own understanding of the relationship between *res* and *ens*.

Scotus's discussion of *ens ratum* indicates that he has R1 in mind rather than R2. If the relational character that establishes R1 for Henry is removed, then one is left with the obvious question: what differentiates R1 from R2? Why is something

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[107] See Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens*, 33.

[108] Henry, *Summa quaestionum ordinariarum*, a. 21, q. 4.

[109] Ibid., a. 34, q. 2: "Ratio enim rei (ut dicit Avicenna in primo Metaphysicae suae loquens de tali re in quantum res est) ratio propria est quod nomine suo exprimat naturam & quidditatem eius cuius est simpliciter & absolute absque conditione esse, sive in intellectu sive extra ipsum, aut non esse" (fol. 212rR-S).

[110] Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 2, q. un., n. 323 (ed. Vatican, vol. 3, 194): "… nullus respectus est ratitudo, sive quo aliquid est firmum ens vel verum ens vel certum ens, in quacumque entitate, quia omnis respectus habet aliquid in quo fundatur, quod secundum se non est ad aliud…."

[111] Scotus offers six arguments against Henry's position. See Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 36, q. un., nn. 13-25. Cf. Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens*, 31-32.

[112] See Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 36, q. un., n. 13.

[113] On the various interpretations pertaining to *ens ratum*, *esse intelligibile*, and *ens deminutum*, see Dominic Perler, "What am I Thinking About? John Duns Scotus and Peter Aureol on Intentional Objects," *Vivarium* 32.1 (1994): 72-89; Peter King, "Duns Scotus on Mental Content," in ed., Olivier Boulnois, *Duns Scot à Paris 1302-2002* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 65-88; Tobias Hoffmann, *Creatura Intellecta: Die Ideen und Possibilien bei Duns Scotus mit Ausblick auf Franz von Mayronis, Poncius und Mastrius* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2002); Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus's Theory of Cognition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), c. 10.

like a *hircocervus* relegated only to the status of R2, whereas a cat, for example, can be considered a 'thing' in the sense of R1? Instead of appealing to a divine idea, as Henry of Ghent had done, Scotus turns to the intrinsic quidditative structures that a thing has as the reason for its being R1. But what are those structures and how do they function to make something ratified (*ratum*)? Scotus takes a twofold approach to that question. That is an *ens ratum* which: "[R1.1] has of itself a firm [*firmum*] and true being [*esse*], whether of essence or of existence (since one is not without the other howsoever they are distinguished), or [R1.2] 'ratified being' [*ens ratum*] is that which is said to be in the first place distinguished from fictions, namely, that to which being a true essence or [true] existence is not repugnant."[114]

Scotus makes a number of important observations regarding these two senses of R1. In the first sense (R1.1), what is at issue is an individually existing being, for example, the individual human being Socrates. If Socrates exists, then Scotus grants that Socrates is an *ens ratum* for it would be absurd to say that Socrates, while he is living, breathing, and moving (i.e., existing) is not a true or real being. Nevertheless, Scotus points out that in the sense of R1.1 something is not an *ens ratum* (i.e., 'real') through itself (*ex se*), but is only 'real' on account of an external efficient cause: God. No creature is *causa sui*. The true existential reality that any creature possesses is not a function of its own essence or *ratio* but is entirely due to God's free creative causality. Does this mean, then, that an *ens ratum* is simply whatever is efficiently caused or existent? Scotus answers affirmatively, but adds further clarification. The identification of *ens ratum* with the existent does not preclude offering a definition of a non-actually existing being. A definition corresponds to a distinct cognition of the defined thing—in the present example, a human being—with respect to all of its essential elements. To understand that a human being is 'rational' (i.e., a feature of its essential constitution) is not thereby to know that a human being actually exists.[115] Scotus insists, "it does not follow that 'an *ens ratum* is definitively understood, therefore an [*ens*] *ratum* exists.'"[116] This observation leads to the second perspective on *ens ratum*.

In a second sense (R1.2), a thing is called *ens ratum* through itself because it is not formally self-contradictory. Scotus adds that whatever is repugnant to something is formally repugnant according to its own nature (*ratio*). For example, while the *rationes* of 'white' and 'black' do not fall under the *ratio* of human nature, they are not formally contradictory to the *ratio* of human nature. To be non-rational is,

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[114] Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 36, q. un., n. 48 (ed. Vat., vol. 6, 290): "… dico quod 'ens ratum' aut appellatur illud quod habet ex se firmum et verum esse, sive essentiae sive existentiae (quia unum non est sine altero, qualitercumque distinguantur), aut 'ens ratum' dicitur illud quod primo distinguitur a figmentis, cui scilicet non repugnat esse verum essentiae vel existentiae."

[115] Thomas Aquinas makes a similar argument in *De ente et essentia*, c. 4 where he says that one can know what a human being is or what a phoenix is without thereby knowing whether either exists.

[116] Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 36, q. un., n. 49 (ed. Vat., vol. 6, 290): "… non sequitur 'ens ratum definitive intelligitur, ergo ratum est.'"

however, repugnant to human nature since non-rationality contradicts the specific difference of human nature: rationality. If it were the case that 'to be' (*esse*) were repugnant to a human being, then it would be repugnant in no other way, Scotus holds, except with respect to human nature itself. But existence is not repugnant, which means *humanitas* is a *res* in the sense of R1.2. Scotus points out that the claim 'a human being is *ex se ens ratum*' does not thereby imply that a human being is God. "God is not only that to which being [*esse*] is non-repugnant, but is being itself *ex se*."[117] A human being, in contrast, is not being *ex se* but *ab alio* (i.e., from God).

What should we gather from Scotus's development of R1? We see that, for Scotus, something is called 'real' not on account of a relation to a divine exemplar, as Henry of Ghent held, but through itself in the sense of R1.2. Accordingly, non-repugnance functions as an internal quidditative condition for something's being real: "Being (is that) to which it is not repugnant to be."[118] Yet, as Rolf Darge points out, Scotus's appeal to non-repugnance is grist for the mill of those, such as Olivier Boulnois, who view Scotus as making a retreat to the domain of the logically possible.[119] According to Boulnois, Scotistic being, "*includes being*[*s*] *of reason* and coincides with the set of representable objects, taking up the function of the *opinable* or the *res a reor* of Henry, while refusing the subdivision founded upon exemplar being and the primacy of the essence that accompanies it."[120] Similarly, because Suárez's own account of real being takes its cues from the Scotistic conception, Courtine views Suárez's doctrine of being as constituting one of two "irreducible" and "conflicting" ontologies. There is, on the one hand, the ontology of Thomas Aquinas, who understands being existentially in terms of the *actus essendi*, and, on the other hand, the ontological consortium of Henry, Scotus, and Suárez who allegedly regard being simply in terms of logical non-contradiction.[121]

Yet the metaphysical situation that Scotus describes, to say nothing of Suárez's own view, is more nuanced than it is often portrayed. First, Scotus's notion of *ens ratum* is meant to overcome the deficiencies of Henry's notion of *res* not in the indeterminate or most general sense of R2, as Boulnois suggests, but in the metaphysically determinate sense of R1. This is especially evident in light of the fact that Scotus explains *ens ratum* (R1) as that which distinguishes something from being a figment (R2). Accordingly, R1 can hardly be claimed to embrace *ens rationis* in

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[117] Ibid., n. 50 (ed. Vat, vol. 6, 291): "… Deus non tantum est cui non repugnat esse, sed ex se ipsum esse."

[118] Scotus, *Ordinatio* IV, d. 1, q. 2, n. 8 (ed. L. Wadding, vol. 16, 109): "Ens (est hoc) cui non repugnat esse."

[119] Darge, *Suárez' transzendental Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 166.

[120] Boulnois, *Être et représentation*, 449: "Elle *inclut alors l'être de raison* et coïncide avec l'ensemble des objets représentables, reprenant la fonction de l'*opinable* ou de la *res a reor* d'Henri, tout en refusant la subdivision fondée sur l'être exemplaire et le primat de l'essence qui l'accompagne" (emphases in original).

[121] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 379.

the way that R2 does.[122] Second, as we also saw, Scotus rejects the idea that actual existence follows from the fact that something is a 'thing' in the sense of R1. God's efficient causality is still required to produce the creature as a real being (R1.1). We need not pursue Scotus's thinking regarding *ens ratum* further to appreciate that his account of *res* does two things. It (1) articulates the quidditative (as opposed to existential) dimension of being and (2) indicates that the sense of *res* which corresponds to that quidditative structure is not the metaphysically indeterminate *res a reor reris*.

There remains, however, one controversial text (the third question of his *Quaestiones quodlibetales*) wherein Scotus's ultimate determination of the meaning of *res* seems to unfold in terms of thinkability. As he says, *res* taken most commonly (*res communissime sumptum*=RC), "extends to anything [*quodcumque*] that is not nothing."[123] This claim is not entirely unlike that made in the *Ordinatio*, where he points to freedom from non-contradiction as constitutive of R1.2.[124] Yet, the conclusion that Scotus infers within the *Quaestio de quodlibet* runs in a contrary direction. As Courtine and others allege to be the case with Suárez's notion of being, in the quodlibetal text Scotus clearly determines the meaning not only of *res* but also of being as the object of the intellect in terms of an opposition to nothing or, what is the same, in terms of a double negation (*non nihil*). To make sense of this situation, Scotus explains that 'nothing' (N) can be taken in two different senses. First, nothing (N1) can be taken in the sense of that which includes a contradiction, which excludes all existence (*esse*) both inside and outside the mind. 'Nothing' in the sense of N1 cannot be some being (*ens*) in the mind "because a contradictory [x] with a contradictory [$\neg x$] can in no way constitute one intelligible thing."[125] Second, (N2) nothing pertains to what is not and is unable to be a being (*ens*) outside of the mind. Relative to N1, Scotus explains that RC extends to everything that does not involve a contradiction whether it be a being of reason or a real being. Relative to N2, *res* only signifies "that which has or is able to have some entity not from an act of the mind [*ex consideratione intellectus*]."[126]

These two senses of *res*—the most common (RC) sense and in a more restricted sense—seem to correspond to the senses of *res* identified above, namely, R2 and R1 respectively. Yet, here Scotus uses freedom from self-contradiction not to determine R1.2, in the metaphysically determinate sense, but as a constitutive element of the thinkable. "Whatever is conceivable" (*quodlibet conceptibile*) is called RC. Whether the relationship between real being and beings of reason taken most

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[122] Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 36, q. un., n. 48 (ed. Vat., vol. 6, 290): "… 'ens ratum' dicitur illud quod primo distinguitur a figmentis, cui scilicet non repugnat esse verum essentiae vel existentiae."

[123] Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones quodlibetales*, q. 3 (ed. Vivès, vol. 25, 114): "… hoc nomen *res* potest sumi communissime… prout se extendit ad quodcumque, quod non est nihil."

[124] Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 36, q. un., n. 48.

[125] Ibid.: "… quia numquam contradictorium cum contradictorio constituit unum intelligibile…."

[126] Ibid.: "… quod habet vel habere potest aliquam entitatem non ex consideratione intellectus."

commonly forms an analogical or univocal community, Scotus leaves unsaid. He only remarks that RC can be the "first object of the intellect" (*primum objectum intellectus*).[127] Jan Aertsen rightly complains that this Scotistic text leaves the reader unsatisfied because it neither makes a determination regarding the univocity of the *conceptus entis*, so crucial to Scotus's overall metaphysical vision, nor does Scotus make any indication whether *res* taken as the object of the intellect is the same as the object of metaphysics.[128] I cannot settle these questions here, but it will be sufficient simply to determine what influence (if any) Scotus's thinking regarding this most common sense of *res* (RC) has upon Suárez. But before we can move on to an explicit consideration of Suárez's fully developed account of being—especially with reference to the Scotistic conception of *res*—a further distinction that the Jesuit employs in his elucidation of being needs to be discussed.

4. Being as a Participle and as a Noun

Suárez, like many late scholastic thinkers, holds that being (*ens*) can be taken either (1) as a participle (*participialiter sumptum*) or (2) as a noun (*nominaliter sumptum*).[129] While the former always signifies the act of existing, the latter signifies the formal essence of a thing. To say that nominal being signifies a 'formal essence' does not mean, however, that any existential considerations are excluded.[130] On Suárez's view, an essence is signified precisely as that which "has existence" or as that which is "apt to exist" (*esse*). Just as the participle 'living' (*vivens*) signifies an actually living organism, taken as a noun, 'life' signifies that nature which is apt to be a principle of vital operation. Suárez further reports that, according to the logicians (*dialectici*), taken as a participle, being always connotes time.[131] When, for example, one says 'Adam exists,' such a proposition is true if and only if Adam actually exists when the proposition is asserted "since existence can never be said of something not actually existent."[132] Suárez explains the distinction between nominal and participial being

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[127] Ibid.

[128] Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 647.

[129] *DM* 2.4.3.

[130] This is especially important to note in light of criticisms levelled against Suárez by Courtine and Víctor Sanz.

[131] Here, it should be noted that Suárez limits the association of participial being with time to the domain of logical propositions pertaining to creatures, in particular two-term propositions (*de secundo adjacente*). As Doyle points out, "with the exception of '*Deus est*,' all existential two-term propositions would be contingent propositions of inherence" ("Suárez on Beings of Reason and Truth," in *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548-1617)*, ed. Victor M. Salas [Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010], 199). For Suárez, participial being (*ens*) does not pertain to the essence of anything except God who is timeless or eternal. *DM* 2.4.13. For more on different kinds of proposition in Suárez see Doyle, "Suárez on Beings of Reason and Truth," 197-200.

[132] *DM* 2.4.3 (vol., 25, 88): "… et ideo haec vox, *existens* nunquam dici potest de re quae actu non existat…." Cf. ibid., 31.4.5.

in a fashion similar to Scotus.[133] The proposition 'Caesar is not' concerns *esse existere*, Scotus explains, and pertains only to participial being. In contrast, nominal being signifies something as 'having an essence' that can be located within one of the ten categories. Even if Caesar does not presently exist, the proposition referring to nominal being—'Caesar is being [*ens*]'—remains true.[134] Unlike participial being, nominal being does not connote time. Accordingly, nominal being can be attributed both to what actually or presently exists as well as to that which does not.[135]

Having distinguished these two senses of being, Suárez points out that metaphysics "considers [nominal] being,"[136] and not participial being. As an Aristotelian science, metaphysics abstracts or prescinds from that which is particular and contingent and focuses, instead, on the universal and necessary attributes of its objects.[137] But existence, as we saw above when discussing Thomas's claim that it is extra-quidditative, is only a contingent feature of individually existing (created) things.[138] If existence must be left aside, then, for the purposes of conducting metaphysics as an Aristotelian science, how can one claim that any scientific metaphysics is 'existential'? It would seem that any scientific approach to being is doomed to some form of essentialism.

The prospects for a scientific and existential metaphysics are not so bleak as one might initially think. In order to see how science and existential considerations can be reconciled, two questions need to be addressed. First, beyond what has already been stated, what exactly is nominal being (i.e., the subject of metaphysics) and, second, how do nominal being and participial being relate to one another (if at all)?

For Suárez, nominal being "is that which has a real essence [RE], that is not a fiction nor a chimera, but is true and apt really to exist."[139] The fact that he juxtaposes RE with fictions and chimerae suggests that he understands 'real' here in the above-discussed sense of R1. I shall return to this point in a moment. To determine what RE is, Suárez thinks two further questions need to be answered: first, what is the nature (*ratio*) of 'essence' when speaking of 'real essence' and, second, what is meant by 'real'?[140]

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[133] See Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones in libros Perihermenias Aristotelis* (eds. M. Dreyer, H. Möhle, St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 2004), lib. 1, q. 8. Cf. Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 599-600.

[134] Ibid.

[135] *DM* 2.4.3.

[136] Ibid. (vol. 25, 88): "… metaphysica considerat ens [nominaliter sumptum]…."

[137] See Aristotle *Posterior Analytics* 1.6,74b5-6 and 1.8; *Metaphysics* 6.2.1027a20-21. Cf. *DM* 1.5.4; ibid., 43.2.11.

[138] *DM* 6.2.2 (vol. 25, 206): "… omnis res, quae existit necessario est singularis et individua."

[139] Ibid., 2.4.5 (vol. 25, 89): "… si ens sumatur prout est significatum hujus vocis in vi nominis sumptae, ejus ratio consistit in hoc, quod sit habens essentiam realem, id est non fictam, nec chymericam, sed veram et aptam ad realiter existendum."

[140] Ibid., 2.4.6.

'Essence' can be understood in a twofold manner. It can be considered either (a) in relation to its effects or properties (*passiones*) or (b) with respect to our way of thinking or speaking about essence. In the first sense (a), Suárez largely follows Thomas Aquinas's account of 'essence' as presented in the *De ente et essentia*. Essence is "that first, radical, and intimate principle of all actions and properties which follow from a thing and according to which it is called the *nature of each and everything*."[141] There is nothing particularly novel about this account for it is the standard Aristotelian account of nature understood as an inner principle of operations.[142] But if nature (φυσις from the verb φυειν) can serve as a principle of operation (i.e., second act), it is only because a nature or essence is that which primarily *exists*. Suárez fundamentally identifies a real essence with that which actively exerts its own causal efficacy. Courtine's claim that "the *reality* of being" for Suárez is entirely "autonomous [and] independent from all empiricity [*empiricité*] and from all effectiveness"[143] fails to capture this aspect of Suárez's teaching. Through its operations and efficient (causal) communication of itself to other beings, a real essence manifests itself as dynamic. That dynamic actuality, moreover, is the very root of being's intelligibility.

This leads to the second (b) consideration of essence, in which Suárez, once again, seems content to follow Thomas's determination on the matter. "We say that the essence of a thing is that which is explained through a definition."[144] What this means is that an essence is that which is first conceived or known about a thing.[145] It is not, however, just something revealed through any particular action which may fall outside of a thing's quiddity (e.g., a cat's sneezing). Rather, an essence is what primarily and intrinsically constitutes something to be this or that kind of thing. "It is called 'essence,' since it is that which through the act of being is first to be understood in each and every thing."[146] There is no doubt that Suárez understands essence quidditatively, but there is also no doubt that that quidditative understanding takes into account the exigencies of existence itself. The same holds equally for his explanation of what 'real' means with respect to RE.

Like 'essence,' 'real' can be explained in a twofold sense: one negative and the other positive. In a negative sense, Suárez says that for an essence to be 'real' means that: "[α] it involves no self-repugnance nor [β] is it merely confected by the intel-

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[141] Ibid. (vol. 25, 89): "… essentiam rei esse id, quod est primum et radicale, ac intimum principium omnium actionem ac proprietatum, quae rei conveniunt, et sub hanc ratione dicitur *natura uniuscuiusque*" (emphases in original).

[142] See Aristotle *Physics*, 2.1.192b-20-23.

[143] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 243: "La *réalité* de l'être … pris en vue est pour ainsi dire autonome, indépendant de toute empiricité et de toute effectivité."

[144] *DM* 2.4.6 (vol. 25, 89): "… dicimus essentiam rei esse, quae per definitionem explicatur…."

[145] Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 7.1.1028a31-1028b1.

[146] *DM* 2.4.6 (vol., 25, 89): "… appellatur *essentia,* quia est id quod per actum essendi primo esse intelligitur in unaquaque re."

lect."[147] I have marked two distinct aspects—(α) and (β)—within this description of 'real.' Failure to recognize the complex account that Suárez renders has led to overly reductive interpretations regarding what he means by 'real.' Indeed Suárez's description has generated a trend of interpretation that Rolf Darge calls "logicalizing" (*logizistische*).[148] This trend takes its point of departure from Étienne Gilson, who, as already noted, traces the essentialism of early modern ontology back to Suárez. That interpretation has largely shaped subsequent scholarship devoted to Suárez's metaphysics as can be seen in the cases of Elisabeth Rompe,[149] John Doyle,[150] and Jean-François Courtine,[151] among many others. Central to the logicalizing interpretation is the idea that being is reduced to the *possibile logicum*. Gilson expresses this notion when he claims that: "Being [*l'être*] is reduced to essence, which is itself reduced to the possible."[152] But the possible, "is that which can exist precisely because its notion implies no contradiction, nothing opposes it from being able to exist."[153] Echoing these claims, John Doyle insists that, "The touchstone … of real being, the pre-requisite for inclusion under the common objective concept of being as a noun which is the object of metaphysics, is simply non-contradiction."[154] Courtine follows suit: "What, for example, allows one to speak of *essentia realis* itself in the absence of all existence? This entity … will always be defined by Suárez in negative terms… [as] nothing other than non-contradiction."[155] Finally, one can also consider Boulnois's claim that, "*Essentia realis* constitutes the object of a concept, the logical unity of which is non-contradictory."[156]

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147 Ibid., 2.4.7 (vol. 25, 89): "… essentiam realem esse, quae in sese nullam involvit repugnantiam, neque est mere conficta per intellectum."

148 Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 37-48.

149 Rompe, *Die Trennung von Ontologie und Metaphysik. Der Ablösungsprozess und seine Motivierung bei Benedictus Pererius und anderen Denken des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, Phil. Diss. Bonn, 1968.

150 Doyle, "Suarez on the Reality of the Possibles," *The Modern Schoolman* 45 (1967): 29-40; idem, "Suarez on the Analogy of Being," *The Modern Schoolman* 46 (1969): 219-49; 323-41; idem, "Heidegger and Scholastic Metaphysics," *The Modern Schoolman* 49 (1972): 201-20.

151 Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 255, 264, 286.

152 Gilson, *L'être et l'essence* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1962), 178: "… l'être se réduit à l'essence, qui se réduit elle-même au possible." Cf. Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 38.

153 Ibid., 173: "… le possible est ce qui peut exister, précisément parce que, sa notion n'impliquant aucune contradiction, rien ne s'oppose à ce qu'il puisse exister."

154 Doyle, "Suarezian and Thomistic Metaphysics Before the Judgement of Heidegger," in, ed. Victor M. Salas, *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez*, 95. Cf. also idem, "Suarez on the Reality of the Possibles," 33: "… it is precisely as non-self-contradictory that it [i.e., possible being] has the intrinsic character required for the inclusion under the common concept of being as a noun." Cf. also idem, "Suarez on the Analogy of Being," 77: "It is our view, then, that for Suarez non-repugnance or non-contradiction is the lowest common intrinsic denominator of being wherever it is found."

155 Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 319: "… qui permet par exemple de parler d'*essentia realis* même en l'absence de toute existence? Cette entité… sera toujour définie par Suarez en termes négatifs. … rien d'autre que la non-contradiction."

156 Boulnois, *Être et représentation*, 483-84: "L'*essentia realis* constitue l'objet d'un concept dont l'unité logique est non contradictoire."

In challenging the aforementioned interpreters I do not mean to suggest that the Suárezian conception is refactory to logical possibility. Insofar as a criterion for what it means to be 'real' is freedom from contradiction, which is just the basis of logical possibility, being must be that which is at least logically possible. The question though is whether the Suárezian account of being is reducible to the *possibile logicum* with no remainder. It strikes me than many of Suárez's interpreters do regard him precisely in such a fashion so that any distinction between logic and metaphysics would collapse into an onto-logic or *Seinsvergessenheit*. Nevertheless, nowhere does Suárez state that the non-contradictory as such constitutes the object of metaphysics. Rather, he consistently describes that object *positively* as 'real being.'[157] Suárez's framing of the question regarding the proper object of metaphysics stands in marked contrast to later thinkers, such as Clemens Timpler, who do in fact identify the object of metaphysics with the "πᾶν νοητόν" or "*omne intelligibile*."[158] For Suárez, in contrast, freedom from contradiction constitutes only one criterion of what makes an essence to be real. That is real which (α) not only lacks self-contradiction but which is also (β) not a mere product of the intellect. If the 'real' is not a product of the intellect, it must stand apart from being in the intellect (*esse objectivum*) as that which enjoys extramental existence. To appeal to that which exists outside the mind is not simply to construe being in terms of a negation but more positively as that which exists. It is this positive existential character that constitutes an essence as 'real.'

The logicalizing interpretation gives no consideration to the positive, existential character of the 'real' but truncates the Suárezian account entirely to the first moment (α). Darge rightly points out that the focus of the negative determination of what constitutes the 'real' is not so much (α) but (β), for even certain logical forms or *predicabilia*—i.e., relations of reason—do not involve self-contradictions but, in addition to negations and privations, are nevertheless ranked as *entia rationis*.[159] In this regard, one may consider Suárez's example of '*homo*' which, taken as a species

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157 Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 39.

158 Timpler, *Metaphysicae systema methodicum*, lib. 1, c. 1, prob, 5 (Hanoviae, 1616).

159 See *DM* 54.3; ibid., 54.2.1, 16; ibid., 54.3.5-6; ibid., 54.6. Daniel Novotný maintains that Suárez is not at all clear regarding what makes it impossible for non-contradictory beings of reason to exist in actual reality. He suggests "incompleteness" as a possible answer but notes that Suárez himself does not mention that possibility. See Novotný, Ens rationis *from Suárez to Caramuel: A Study in Scholasticism of the Baroque Era* (Bronx, NY: Fordham University, 2013), 102. I concede that the matter remains murky for Suárez. Here, I shall only make two points. First, I suspect Suárez assumes that an exaggerated form of realism is untenable, especially in light of the nominalist critiques that emerged in the fourteenth century. Indeed, within *DM* 31.11.4 Suárez insists that "simpliciter dicendum est existentiam proprie et immediate solum esse rerum singularium…" (vol. 26, 272). Yet, the non-contradictory second intentions that Suárez identifies are universals, rather than individual beings. To claim that such second intentions could be brought into being would, I suspect, force Suárez into an uncomfortable agreement with a very exaggerated form of realism. Second, even if Suárez's account of *entia rationis* remains problematic on this score, it does not detract from the fact that Suárez's account of what makes a being 'real' trades upon more than mere freedom from self-contradiction.

or second intention, can never exist outside the mind as a *real* being; yet, surely there is no contradiction in the notion of '*homo*'—no conflict of internal predicates A and ¬A—otherwise, human beings would be impossible.[160] But human beings do exist, therefore they are possible and free of contradiction. In contrast to '*homo*,' one can consider a *hircocervus* which involves the composition of two contradictory elements: 'goat' and 'stag.' If it is the case that neither '*homo*,' taken as a second intention, nor *hircocervus* is a real being, then freedom from self-contradiction, is an insufficient explanation for what 'real' means. As Darge puts it, "Freedom from contradiction is only a necessary condition for an entity to be more than a mere construct of the intellect."[161] So then what accounts for the difference between what is real and what is not? Beyond (α) something must not be (β) a mere product of the intellect. The difference between '*homo*'—taken as a second intention—and a *hircocervus* is that the former does not involve an inner contradiction (α) whereas the latter does. The difference, however, between '*homo*' and the black cat sitting at my feet—neither of which involves self-contradiction (α)—is that the cat is (β) not a mere product of my mind. This leads to another question: in virtue of what is my cat more than just a mere product of the mind? To answer that question a positive determination of what it means to be 'real' must be offered, which is what Suárez immediately supplies.

The positive explication, like the negative one, also has two aspects, one a posteriori and the other a priori. In terms of the a posteriori explanation, Suárez tells us that to be 'real' is "to be a principle or a real base [*radix*] of operation, or an effect, whether it be in the genus of efficient, formal, or material cause; thus there is no real essence that is not able to have some real effect or property."[162] One might object that this is less than a satisfying account of the 'real' since the *definiens* would seem to be in the *definiendum*: that is *real* which has *real* properties. Nevertheless, Suárez points out that he is not offering a definition here "since the character [of being] is most abstract and most simple, [that] one cannot properly define it."[163] All that can be offered with respect to something as fundamental and primitive as being is a kind of "description" or an "explanation of terms."[164] This seems to be precisely what Suárez is doing—offering a 'description'—relative to our experience of being. What is 'real' is what we confront in our experience of what actually exists. The 'real'

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[160] *DM* 54.2.1.

[161] Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 41: "Die Widerspruchsfreiheit bildet lediglich eine notwendige Bedingung dafür, daß eine Wesenheit mehr als ein bloßes Gebilde des Intellekts sein kann."

[162] *DM* 2.4.7 (vol. 25, 89): "Posterior autem modo explicari potest, vel a posteriori, per hoc quod sit principium vel radix realium operationem, vel effectuum, sive sit in genere causae efficientis, sive formalis, sive materialis; sic enim nulla est essentia realis quae non possit habere aliquam effectum vel proprietatem realem."

[163] Ibid., 2.4.1 (vol. 25, 87-88): "… nam, cum illa ratio sit abstractissima et simplicissima, proprie definiri non potest…."

[164] Ibid.

emerges into our field of inquiry with its own characteristic activity that is itself productive of being (i.e., effects) and intelligibility. Thoughts or concepts, however, do not beget effects. While certain concepts or ideas might entail or include other ideas (e.g., as what occurs in the case of a 'bachelor' and an 'unmarried man'), there is a difference between conceptual analysis and the production of some new being, that latter of which pertains to causality. Try as hard as I might, I can never recover the concept of 'boiling water' from the concept of 'heat.' But I have no difficulty perceiving that, in reality, the essence of the burning fire before me functions as the explanation (cause) for why the pot of water set above it boils.

Accordingly, to add greater resolution to the affirmative sense of 'real,' Suárez turns to an a priori explanation which is also twofold. To say that something is 'real' is to say that it has an extrinsic cause. While this has the benefit of avoiding circularity, Suárez himself notes that this explanation is inadequate since not all real being has an extrinsic cause. God, after all, is real but has no cause. Hence, Suárez states, "we are only able to say a real essence is that which of itself is apt to be [*esse*], or really to exist."[165] We see, then, that given his intrinsic explanation of 'real' in terms of an aptitude to existence, Suárez's understanding of what is real is not the metaphysically indeterminate sense of *res a reor reris*. The 'real' does not include fictions and is construed, instead, in terms of extra-mental existence, which is to say that, for Suárez, being is not construed in complete isolation from or with indifference to existence.

In light of the fact that Suárez develops his account of being beyond the negative determinations mentioned above (viz., α and β), it cannot readily be concluded that his account of being unfolds exclusively in terms of the *possibile logicum* or as that which is simply thinkable. Beyond what is logically possible and what is thinkable, Suárez identifies being positively in terms of its aptitude to existence (*aptitudo ad esse*). In this regard, Suárez's metaphysical approach stands in marked contrast to that of one of his future order brothers, Rodrigo de Arriaga, who operated out of Prague between 1625 and 1667. Arriaga tersely states: "We define being in common [*ens in commune*] by means of non-repugnance to existence."[166] Absent from this definition are the additional criteria that Suárez had identified for real being: namely, (1) that being is more than just a mere product of the intellect and (2) that being is that which is apt to exist. What is more, as Arriaga understands it, this freedom from self-contradiction is just the same as what is called 'possibility' (*possibilitas*).[167] More specifically, Arriaga identifies it in terms of 'logical possibility,'

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165 Ibid. (vol. 25, 92-93): "… unde solum dicere possumus, essentiam realem, eam esse quae ex se apta est esse, seu realiter existere."

166 Arriaga, *Cursus philosophicus* (Lyon, 1669: 957), Metaph., disp. 2, n. 1: "Definimus ens in communi per non-repugnantiam ad existendum…."

167 Ibid.

which encompasses both actual and potential beings.[168] Importantly, whereas other philosophers—such as Suárez and Hurtado de Mendoza[169]—describe possibility in terms of extrinsic denomination in relation to God's omnipotence, Arriaga holds that "possibility is entirely intrinsic to things themselves as a foundation."[170] So understood, possibility ranges over God and creature: "For in the concept of being, namely, what can exist, I conceive equally God and creatures, and thereupon I conceive the logical possibility to exist."[171] Further still, since God and creature are "equal" in their freedom from inner contradiction, in virtue of which they are 'being,' Arriaga rejects the *analogia entis* in favor of the claim that the *conceptus entis* is univocal.[172]

Here, I shall leave aside any futher considerations of Arriaga whom I reference simply to highlight the distinction between one scholastic thinker who does frame being in terms of the *possibile logicum* (viz., Arriaga) and one who does does not (viz., Suárez).[173] In addition to freedom from self-contradiction, positively speaking, being is understood in its reference to existence (*ordo ad esse*). We see, then, that Suárez explains both elements of RE (viz., 'real' and 'essence') in terms of some existential determination, either as what is more than just a product of the intellect as well as what is apt to exist, which is congruous with his overall understanding of being itself as identical with existence: "For being [*esse*] and existence [*existere*] are the same…";[174] also,"being, insofar as it is being [*ens in quantum ens*], is said from existence [*esse*], and has the character of being [*rationem entis*] through existence

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[168] Ibid., sec. 1, sub. 4, n. 18.

[169] See *DM* 31.2.2, 7 and Hurtado, *Universa philosophia*, Metaph., disp. 8, s. 1 (Lyon, 1624, 827-29). Cf. John P. Doyle, "Suarez on the Possibles," 32-34 and Saxlová, "Das Seiende Als Solches in Arriagas Metaphysik," 152-54.

[170] Arriaga, *Cursus philosophicus*, Metaph., sec. 1, sub. 4, n. 3 (Lyon, 1669: 957): "… haec possibilitas est omnino intrinseca ipsis rebus, estque fundamentum…."

[171] Ibid., Metaph., disp. 1, s. 1, subsec. 1, n. 7 (Lyon, 1669: 958): "… nam in conceptu entis, scilicet quod potest existere, concipio aequaliter Deum & creaturas, & tunc concipio Logicum possibilitatem ad existendum…."

[172] Ibid., Logica, disp. 11, s. 4, subsec. 1, n. 31.

[173] Like Suárez, Arriaga does not think that mere logical possibility suffices for an adequate account of being. While the younger Jesuit frames being in terms of logical possibility, he is clear that "possibility is not to be explained by a negation of contradiction *independently from existence*, but by that existence supposed, as by a condition" (ibid., Metaph., disp. 2, sec. 1, subsec. 2, n. 22 [Lyon, 1669: 960]: "… possibilitas non est explicanda per negationem contradictionem independenter ab existentia, sed per illam supposita existentia, ut conditione.") That is to say, even possibility seems to be explained in terms of existence rather than existence in terms of possibility. As already noted in the Introduction to the present volume, Christian Wolff maintains a similar position: "possibility does not determine existence […] possibility is not the sufficient reason for existence, on the contrary, thus far from the fact that something possible is recognized a priori, it is not yet understood why it exists" (Wolff, *Philosophia prima, sive ontologia*, pars 1, sec. 2, c. 3, § 172 [Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1736: 141-42]: "… *possibilitate existentiam non determinari … possibilitatem non esse rationem sufficientem existentiae,* atque adeo ex eo, quod aliquid possibile a priori agnoscatur, nondum intelligi, cur existat.").

[174] *DM* 2.4.1 (vol. 25, 88): "… esse enim et existere idem sunt …."

[*esse*] or by reference to existence [*esse*];"[175] further, "every real entity is constituted by some real existence [*esse*], since being [*ens*] is said from 'to exist' [*esse*], and real being from real existence."[176] Finally, we might consider the following passage: "existence, as existence, corresponds to being as such and is of its intrinsic character, whether in potency, or in act, just as it was taken as being; and therefore, just as being does not constitute a special genus, so neither does existence."[177]

Yet, one may still question Suárez's commitment to an existential perspective on account of his identification of *ens* with *res*. Many scholars advancing the logicalizing interpretation have suggested that the Suárezian reduction of *ens* to *res* ultimately undermines any existential commitment since *res* only signifies a thing's quiddity. Darge observes that the situation is rendered even more problematic insofar as there is a tendency to identify Suárez as operating upon a "Scotistic horizon."[178] As such, the Jesuit is regarded as simply appropriating the Scotistic account of *res*.[179] That account, it is further alleged, is resolved in terms of an existentially inert quiddity portrayed as the thinkable.

There can be no doubt that Scotus's thinking on *ens ratum* maps onto a homologous structure within the Suárezian metaphysics. Nevertheless, it is not a foregone conclusion that the Scotistic conception of *res* either precludes any consideration of existence or reduces to the thinkable. For example, with respect to R1.2, as noted above, Scotus identifies *ens ratum* as that which is distinguished from a mere fiction.[180] Suárez maintains something similar, since, as he says, "*res* signifies a quiddity insofar as it is something fixed [*firmam*] and ratified [*ratum*], that is, not a fiction, for which reason it is called a real quiddity."[181] Boulnois is, unfortunately, unaware of this distinction (viz., between R1 and R2), for, he states, "to say that *res* excludes

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175 Ibid., 31.1.1 (vol. 26, 224): "… ens, in quantum ens, ab esse dictum est, et per esse, vel per ordinem ad esse habet rationem entis…."

176 Ibid., 31.4.2 (vol. 26, 235): "… omnis entitas realis constituitur aliquo esse reali, cum ens ab esse dicatur, et ens reale ab esse reali…."

177 Ibid., 50.12.15 (vol. 26, 969): "… existentia, ut existentia, correspondet enti ut sic estque de intrinseca ratione eius vel in potentia, vel in actu, prout sumptum fuerit ens; et ideo, sicut ens non constituit speciale genus, ita neque existentia…." In contrast, Suárez, apparently with Luis de Molina in mind, points out that 'duration' (*duratio*) does not pertain to the character of being as such, as does existence, but is only conceived as an affection that falls outside the character of something existing. See Piero di Vona, *Studi sulla Scolastica della Controriforma. L'esistenza e la sua distinzione metafisica dall'essenza* (Florence: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1968), 60. Cf. *DM* 50.12.15.

178 Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 137: "… le *tournant* suarézien que nous étudions s'inscrit résolument dans l'horizon scotiste."

179 Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 45, n. 55.

180 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 36, q. un., n. 48 (ed. Vat., vol. 6, 290): "… dico quod 'ens ratum' … dicitur illud quod primo distinguitur a figmentis, cui scilicet non repugnat esse verum essentiae vel existentiae."

181 *DM* 2.4.15 (vol. 25, 92): "… nam res dicitur a quidditate, quatenus est aliquid firmum et ratum, id est, non fictum, qua ratione dicitur quidditas realis…."

a fiction is itself a fiction."[182] In support of that claim, Boulnois refers to *DM* 3.3.13[183] where Suárez argues that *res* is not a distinct transcendental attribute but is, instead, synonymous with *ens*.[184] What the Jesuit actually says is this: "Therefore that *res* formally signifies the negation of some fictitious being is itself a fiction."[185] There is no indication that what *res* signifies is a fiction in the metaphysically indefinite sense of R2. Rather, Suárez denies that *res* signifies a negation—more precisely the negation of a fiction—for, as he immediately adds, "*res* is not a negative or privative term, but entirely positive."[186] It is 'positive' because what is expressed or signified is something existing.

Yet, it is that existential structure that renders Suárez's thinking on *res* different from the understanding of *res* stretching back to Avicenna and passing through Henry of Ghent, and Domingo Soto. For Suárez, *res* not only signifies quiddity as 'fixed' or '*ratum*' but more importantly as that which is 'real.' That is to say, *res* signifies a quiddity in terms of existence, for the exercise of existence is what it is to be 'real.'[187] Nevertheless, since Suárez appeals to freedom from self-contradiction in the first moment of his negative explication of 'real,' which is the same philosophical move Duns Scotus makes when describing his account of *res* taken most commonly (*res communissime sumptum*=RC), some interpreters have sought to place Suárez entirely in league with the Scotistic explication of RC.[188] The reduction of Suárez's understanding of *res* to Scotus's account of RC is problematic for two main reasons.

First, Scotus takes RC to form a community or at least a common concept wide enough to embrace not only real being but also beings of reason. He leaves unsaid, though, whether that conceptual community is univocal or analogical. Suárez, in contrast, is clear on the relationship between *ens reale* and *ens rationis*. There can be no metaphysical community between real being and beings of reason. Though he concedes that the two are not equivocally related, they are only nominally related according to an analogy of proper proportionality.[189] While Boulnois capitalizes upon Suárez's concession of the analogical inclusion of *ens rationis* in order to argue that Suárez takes metaphysics in a mentalist direction,[190] Suárez's account of the analogical community that constitutes the object of metaphysics is spelled out in entirely different terms. The subject of metaphysics is not analogical in the

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182 Boulnois, *Être et représentation*, 480: "… dire que la *res* exclut la fiction est même une fiction."

183 The correct citation is actually *DM* 3.2.13.

184 I shall discuss the relationship between *ens* and *res* in a transcendental context in the next chapter.

185 *DM* 3.2.13 (vol. 25, 110): "Quod igitur res de formalli dicat negationem aliquam entis ficti, fictum quidem est…."

186 Ibid. (vol., 25, 110): "… nam res non est terminus negativus seu privativus, sed omnino positivus."

187 Cf. Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 44.

188 Ibid., 45, n. 55.

189 *DM* 54.1.9.

190 Boulnois, *Être et représentation*, 481.

sense of proper proportionality, which is always a matter of extrinsic denomination. Rather, real being is understood in terms of an analogy of intrinsic attribution.[191] Thus, the distinction between real being and beings of reason is not really a division within being at all in the way that the division between finite and infinite being is. "For being of reason," says Suárez, "does not have a common concept nor any real agreement with real being, and therefore the division of being into real being and being of reason is not rightly numerated among the division of being, since it is more a division of name than of reality [*re*]."[192] Beings of reason, then, do not fall under the objective concept of being.[193] This claim stands as a direct repudiation of Scotus's notion of *res* understood in terms of RC.[194] What is more, Suárez's metaphysical determinations regarding the scope of real being—from which *entia rationis* are explicitly excluded—gainsays Courtine's claim that "*ens ut nomen* defines itself precisely as common to what is real in the narrow sense and to *ens rationis*."[195]

Second, in admitting that RC forms the first object of the intellect, Duns Scotus, as mentioned above, leaves unstated whether that object is the same as the object of metaphysics. The temptation is to conclude that the object of the intellect and the object of metaphysics are, in fact, one and the same since, as Aertsen puts it, "If one wants to retain the universal character of First Philosophy, one would have to acknowledge that its subject is identical with the object of the intellect and that, consequently, metaphysics is a 'super-transcendental' science."[196] Whether or not that is Scotus's own determination remains a matter of controversy. With respect to Suárez, however, the matter is entirely different. Unlike Scotus, the Jesuit, as we saw in Chapter One, does not think that *entia rationis* fall under the adequate object of the intellect for the reason that there is not one formal *ratio* according to which one and the same intellectual power grasps *ens reale* and *ens rationis* in a single act.[197] What is more, he explicitly maintains that the object of the intellect is not the same as the object of metaphysics. Whereas the latter abstracts from mobile being, the former includes that as well as all other modes of being.[198]

To say that Suárez is influenced by the Avicennian tradition regarding *res* is entirely different from saying that the Jesuit appropriates without emendation the same notion of *res* that that tradition bequeathed him. Here, two points must be made. First, that tradition, as we have seen, does not have a monolithic conception

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191 *DM* 28.3.17.

192 Ibid., 4.8.4 (vol. 25, 138): "… nam ens rationis … non habet communem conceptum nec realem convenientiam cum ente reali, et ideo divisio entis in ens reale et rationis non recte inter divisiones entis numeratur, quia illa magis est divisio nominis quam rei…."

193 Ibid., 54.1.4.

194 Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 47, n. 64.

195 Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 234: "… l'*ens ut nomen* se définit précisément comme commun au réal au sens étroit (au réel) et à l'*ens rationis*."

196 Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 647.

197 See ch. 1, p. 42-43 supra. Cf. Suárez, *Tractatus de Anima* IV, c. 1, n. 3.

198 *Tractatus de Anima* IV, c. 1, n. 9.

of either *res* or *ens*. Second, while the Avicennian tradition influences Suárez, there are important differences between the two. It is far from the case, for instance, that Suárez's identification of *ens* with *res* transpires in terms of RC. He does not construe metaphysics as a supertranscendental science that has the thinkable as its principle object. On the contrary, he unfailingly interprets *res* in relation to existence. Suárez brings together his thoughts on the relationship among the notions of *ens* (taken as a noun), *res* (in the sense of R1), and real essence (RE) in a passage that should be quoted at length:

> And in this way Saint Thomas said… being [*ens*] signifies the essence of a thing, and is divided across the ten genera. Aristotle, however, said being [*ens*] is not placed in the definition [of things], not because it is outside [their] quiddity, but since it [i.e., being] does not indicate a determinate nature, but intimately transcends everything, just as other [thinkers] say [to be the case] regarding being, as is signified by this term *res* regarding which Soto concedes that it is predicated quidditatively, since it signifies absolutely a real quiddity; for to signify a real quiddity is just the same as to signify a real essence, which being [*ens*] signifies, as prescinding from actual existence, since essence and quiddity are entirely the same, and are only diverse according to the etymology of the names. *But what an essence or a real quiddity is, cannot be understood without an order to existence* [*esse*] *and real actual entity*.[199]

The importance of this passage cannot be overestimated. In it we see that Suárez agrees with Soto that *res*—again, in the sense of R1—signifies the quidditative character of being, such that what is in question is a 'real essence' (RE). But unlike Soto, Suárez develops his quidditative notion of *res* with respect to an existential order. It is not just an essence that *res* signifies but, more importantly, a *real* essence. Though Suárez admits that nominal being prescinds from existence, precision, as he understands it, does not exclude or negate existence.[200] Suárez thereby differs considerably from Avicenna, Henry of Ghent, and Soto concerning the meaning of *res*.[201] Indeed, RE can only be called 'real' (i.e., from *res a ratitudine*) if, of itself, it is apt to be or *really* exist.[202] In describing nominal being as a 'real essence,' Suárez is not, through the addition of the term 'real,' identifying being as existentially inert or neutral, for, again, what he means is something positive (i.e., that which stands outside of nothing in its own existence). If Suárez has performed a metaphysical

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[199] *DM* 2.4.14 (ed. Vol. 25, 92): "Et hoc modo dixit D. Thom., dicto Quodl., ens significare essentiam rei et dividi per decem genera. Aristoteles autem dixit ens non poni in definitionibus, non quia sit extra quidditatem, sed quia non dicit determinatam naturam, sed intime transcendit omnia, sicut alii dicunt de ente, ut significatur hac voce, *res,* de quo Soto supra concedit quidditative praedicari, quia significat absolute quidditatem realem; idem enim est significare quidditatem realem, quod significare essentiam realem, quam significat ens, ut praescindit ab actuali existentia, quia essentia et quidditas idem omnino est, solumque etymologia nominum est diversa. *Quod vero essentia aut quidditas realis sit, intelligi non potest sine ordine ad esse et realem entitatem actualem…*" (emphases mine).

[200] Ibid., 2.4.9 (vol. 25, 90): "… ens enim in vi nominis sumptum significat id, quod habet essentiam realem, praescindendo ab actuali existentia, non quidem exludendo illam, seu negando, sed praecisive tantum abstrahendo…."

[201] Ibid., 2.4.2.

[202] Ibid., 2.4.7.

reduction, as Courtine argues, it is not so much from *ens* to *res*, but rather from *res* to *ens*. There can be no other way if Suárez holds that what is 'real' cannot be understood without also understanding an order to existence (*sine ordine ad esse*). Since *res* has been identified with *ens* and *ens* is derived from *esse*, *res* itself necessarily signifies a quidditative structure that bears a metaphysical ordering or relation to *esse*. In this regard, José Pereira explains that, for Suárez, nominal being is "existence considered in its intelligible content, and not in its actual exercise."[203] Finally, given that metaphysics is concerned with nominal being and that nominal being is itself constituted by its existential reference, existence lies at the very core of the Suárezian doctrine of being.[204]

What Suárez means by the consideration of existence not in its actual exercise can be understood by the way nominal being and participial being are related to one another. In assessing these two senses of being, the question arises whether there is some common, analogical character standing over both nominal and participial being or whether 'being' is attributed to participial and nominal being equivocally. Both alternatives pose problems. If 'being' is analogical with respect to nominal and participial being, then the most common character of being remains undetermined. Only a determination of each member of the division of being would have thus far been presented, not an account of the analogically common *ratio entis* itself.[205] If, however, being is equivocal with respect to participial and nominal being, the consequence is equally dissatisfying since there would then be no concept common to God and creatures. A common concept is necessary, however, for any scientific metaphysics that begins with creation and concludes with the existence of God. A metaphysics wherein the concept of being is equivocal would ultimately succumb to the fallacy of equivocation which is precisely why thinkers such as Scotus and Suárez insist that the concept of being is absolutely simple and unified. What is more, the claim that 'being' is equivocal with respect to nominal and participial being is, to Suárez's lights, "plainly false" and runs contrary to what had already been established in the previous sections of the *Disputationes metaphysicae* concerning the unity of the objective concept of being in which are included all real beings.[206] Furthermore, what holds true for the concept of being should hold true for other concepts. If being were said equivocally of nominal being and participial being, so too would 'human being' be said equivocally of a possible human being and of an actually existing human being. But such a claim is absurd since 'human being' (*homo*) signifies simply what it is to be a human, whether existent or possible.

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[203] Pereira, *Suárez*, 112.

[204] *DM* 2.4.3. Alan Wolter makes a similar argument on behalf of Duns Scotus's metaphysical project against the 'essentialist' readings of Jacques Maritain and Gilson. See Wolter, *The Transcendentals and Their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus* (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1946), 66-71.

[205] Ibid., 2.4.8.

[206] Ibid.

Thus 'human being' is a simple concept that equally represents either an existing or a possible human being, which is to say, 'human being' is not said equivocally of the two.[207] How, then, are we to understand the *ratio entis* vis-à-vis participial and nominal being?

Suárez answers that 'being,' as it pertains to nominal being and participial being, does not signify two different *rationes* that divide a higher common concept as a difference divides a genus. Rather, 'being' signifies the exact same thing but either as more or less contracted.[208] That is, as a noun, being signifies that which has a real essence prescinding from—but again not negating or excluding—actual existence. As a participle, being signifies real being itself or, what is the same, something having a real essence but with the further determination of actual existence. In this latter sense (i.e., participial being), being is signified as more contracted or more determined than is nominal being. For example, 'animal' is said of the genus 'animal' and is also said of a brute animal as a certain kind or species of animal. This twofold attribution, however, does not imply that 'animal' divides some higher concept common to both the genus and this or that particular species, for one and the same *ratio* obtains for both. The only difference is that in a brute or in a human being, 'animal' is more determined or contracted to be this-kind-of-animal, while 'animal' taken just as it is in itself is indeterminate or, as Suárez puts it, 'confused.' The same must be said with respect to 'being' (*ens*).[209] 'Being' does not signify a concept common to nominal and participial being, as if the latter two were subdivisions or *inferiora*. 'Being' immediately has a double signification. It signifies either (1) being prescinding from existence or (2) being as actually existing.[210] The difference between nominal and participial being is the difference between the less determinate and the more determinate. Just as a human being is an animal existing with the further determination of rationality, so likewise participial being is that which has a 'real essence' (nominal being) with the further determination of actual existence.

Further still, without denying being's double signification, Suárez accords a certain preeminence to participial being. "For being [*ens*] first seems to signify a thing having real and actual existence [*esse*], just as the participle of the verb to be [*verbi essendi*]; but thenceforth that word is transferred to signify precisely that which has a real essence."[211] Here, Suárez is consistent with his claim, which he makes several times, that the term '*ens*' is derived from '*esse*' or the '*actus essendi*.'[212]

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[207] Ibid.

[208] Ibid., 2.4.9.

[209] I shall discuss this matter of conceptual contraction below when addressing the manner in which Suárez describes beings' contraction to its *inferiora*.

[210] *DM* 2.4.9.

[211] Ibid. (vol. 25, 90): "Primo enim *ens* significasse videtur rem habentem esse reale et actuale, tamquam participium verbi essendi; inde vero translata est illa vox ad praecise significandum id quod habet essentiam realem."

[212] See, e.g., *DM* 2.4.1; ibid., 31.1.1; ibid., 31.4.2; ibid., 31.7.2.

What this means is that the resolution of the meaning of 'being'—whether that be nominal or participal since being "immediately has a double signification" (*ens … immediate habet duplicem significationem*)[213]—occurs with respect to existence. Pierre Aubenque mischaracterizes Suárez's position, then, when he states that, for the Jesuit, "*ens ut nomen* is therefore more fundamental than *ens participium*, since in order to participate in actual *esse* every being must first realize the requisite of entity in general, which is the ability to exist."[214] In support of his claim he alludes to *DM* 2.4.5, where Suárez identifies the *ratio entis* as that which has a real essence, which is to say, neither a fiction nor a chimera. In short, Aubenque frames the Suárezian notion of being in terms of the logically possible or what can be thought without contradiction. Yet, as Pereira points out, Aubenque misreads the Suárezian text, which focuses not on being taken generally, but only nominally (*in vi nominis sumptae*).[215] Moreover, as we have seen, the "ability to exist," that is the *possibile logicum*, is only a necessary condition for being, not a sufficient one. In addition, an existential reference is required, which is why, as we have seen, Suárez grants preeminence to participial being.

5. Immanence

I have already suggested that Suárez's existential conception of being bears a number of metaphysical implications, not the least of which is that being must be understood as transcendental. Being cannot be localized to a specific category or determinate kind of being, not because it is "extra-quidditative," but because it intimately transcends them all (*intime transcendit omnia*).[216] That is to say, being is essentially contained within all natures, modes, and differences of being and thus renders them all 'real.' Yet this transcendental account seems to generate a difficulty: if all determinate beings are constituted in terms of the existential reference that real being signifies, how is being, which is absolutely unified in itself, contracted to become this or that kind of determinate being? Before concluding his discussion on the *ratio entis* in *DM* 2, Suárez answers this question by outlining the parameters of his transcendental vision. He thereby sets the stage for his full transcendental *explicatio entis* subsequently offered in *DM* 3.

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[213] *DM* 2.4.9.

[214] Aubenque, "Suarez et l'avènment du concept d'être" in, eds. Adelino Cardoso, António Manuel Martins, and Leonel Ribeiro dos Santos, *Francisco Suárez (1548-1617): Tradição e Modernidade* (Lisbon: Edições Colibir, 1999), 16: "L'*ens ut nomen* est donc plus fondamental que l'*ens participium*, puisque pour participer à l'*esse* actuel tout étant doit réaliser d'abord le réquisit de l'éntitaté en général, qui est le pouvoir-exister."

[215] Pereira, *Suárez*, 130-31.

[216] *DM* 2.4.14.

In developing his notion of immanent transcendence, Suárez explicitly opposes Duns Scotus's transcendental theory.[217] Before considering Suárez's effort to advance his own theory, it will therefore be helpful to identify some of the central features of Scotus's transcendental analysis of the concept of being. This task is all the more necessary in light of the fact that several interpreters (e.g., Courtine and Boulnois) regard the two thinkers as developing virtually the same transcendental conception of being.

The concept of being, for Scotus, is *simpliciter simplex*, which means, "it is not resolvable into several concepts, as [is the case with] the concept of being or [the concepts] of ultimate differences."[218] In addition to concepts that are *simpliciter simplex*, Scotus identifies both simple and complex concepts. While complex concepts (e.g., 'big dog') require more than one act of the intellect to produce, a simple concept (e.g., 'dog') requires only a single act. Though they are simple, simple concepts are nevertheless resolvable into concepts that are more elemental. For example, the concept of 'human being' is a simple concept because it can be known through a single intellectual act. Nevertheless, 'human being' can be further resolved into the concepts 'rational' and 'animal.' Although the concept 'rational' (i.e., an ultimate difference) cannot be further resolved, the concept 'animal' can be resolved further into the concepts 'sentient' and 'organism.' This process of conceptual resolution cannot go on indefinitely, Scotus holds, and, at last, one must arrive at two *simplicter simplex* concepts. One of those concepts (i.e., an ultimate difference or *passio entis*) is determining and the other (i.e., the concept of being) is utterly determinable. Scotus envisions the relationship between the determining concept and the determinable concept as a relationship between act and potency.[219] Just as there is a composition of act and potency in a composite being (*ens*), so is a particular being's concept composed of act and potency. The determinable concept (being) stands in potency, as it were, to the actualization that the determining concept (ultimate differences or *passiones entis*) brings to bear.[220]

Given that one *simpliciter simplex* concept determines and the other *simpliciter simplex* concept is determinable, they must be primarily diverse. If the determinable (x) and determining concept (y) were not primarily diverse, they would have something in common (c). Three consequences would follow from such a scenario. First, x and y would not be *simpliciter simplex* because they could be resolved in terms of c.

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[217] On the contrast between Suárez's and Scotus's transcendental theories see Rolf Darge, "Grundthese und ontologische Bedeutung der Lehre von der Analogie des Seienden nach F. Suarez," *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 106 (1999): 312-333; Daniel Heider, "Is Suárez's Concept of Being Analogical or Univocal?", 31-34.

[218] Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 2, n. 71 (ed. Vatican, vol. 3, 49): "… 'simplicter simplex' est qui non est resolubilis in plures conceptus, ut conceptus entis vel ultimae differentiae."

[219] Ibid., I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 3, n. 133. Cf. Scotus, *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis*, lib. 7, q. 19, a. 3 in *Opera philosophica*, eds. R. Andrews, G. Etzkorn, G. Gál, R. Green, F. Kelley, G. Marcil, T. Noone, R. Wood (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1997).

[220] Ibid.

Second, an additional set of differences—(*a*) and (*b*)—would be required in order to differentiate *x* and *y*; *c* would be insufficient since that is what *x* and *y* have in common. Third, *a* and *b* must be primarily diverse, for if they were not, the process of conceptual resolution would occur again. An infinite regress is impossible since nothing would then be known,[221] and thus the process of conceptual resolution must conclude with two concepts that are primarily diverse and therefore *simpliciter simplex*.

With this conceptual schema in place, Scotus thinks that being (*ens*) is not predicated *in quid* of its ultimate differences or attributes.[222] Alan Wolter explains that, for Scotus, while *in quid* predication attributes an entire essence to something, *in quale* predication attributes only some determining factor.[223] For example, to say that 'Socrates is a human being' or that 'Socrates is an animal' is to attribute the essence as a whole—whether a species (human being) or a genus (animal)—to Socrates. But to predicate a genus or species of Socrates is to predicate that which is further determinable, either in terms of an individuality (i.e., this particular human being Socrates) or of a species (i.e., a human kind of animal). To predicate 'rational' or 'snub-nosed' of Socrates is only to attribute a certain determining quality or property to him. The difference between *in quid* and *in quale* predication amounts to the fact that the former is predicated *per modum subsistentis*—that is, as something subsistent unto itself that cannot inhere in anything else as a quality—of something that is determinable and the latter is predicated *per modum denominantis* as that which is determining.[224]

Scotus's claim that being is not predicated *in quid* of its own differences and attributes has considerable implications for his transcendental theory. The novelty of that theory comes about with respect to the nature of the distinction at play between the concept of being and the transcendental attributes. Against Henry of Ghent, Scotus does not think that a distinction of reason suffices to explain the difference between the two concepts.[225] The preceding transcendental tradition held that the various transcendental attributes are distinct only according to reason but are identical *in re*.[226] Scotus, however, holds that if the distinction between two concepts is to be real and meaningful, their corresponding objects must be distinct *in re* for otherwise one would just be entertaining fictions.[227] What Scotus has in mind here is a formal distinction, which is a distinction, not between two things or "of a reality and a reality" (*realitatis et realitatis*), but between two different formalities

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221 Wolter, *The Transcendentals*, 82.

222 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 3, n. 131 (ed. Vatican, vol. 3; 81).

223 Wolter, *The Transcendentals*, 79-80.

224 Ibid., 80.

225 Scotus, *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis*, lib. 7, q. 19, a. 3. For Henry's position, see *Summa quaestionem ordinariarum*, a. 27, q. 1, ad 5.

226 See, e.g., Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 1.

227 Scotus, *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis*, lib. 7, q. 19, a. 3, n. 28; cf. *Ordinatio* II, d. 3, pars 1, q. 1, nn. 32-34.

or *rationes*.[228] The formal distinction, moreover, has its foundation in reality antecedent to any operation of the intellect.[229] It is precisely this kind of distinction that is "seen to be necessary to posit in other things, as is supposed between being [*ens*] and its attributes, in the relation and foundation [between] God and creature."[230]

The formal distinction is not the only distinction *ex natura rei* Scotus utilizes in his transcendental theory. While he deploys a formal distinction to accommodate the convertible transcendentals, Scotus appeals to a modal distinction in his account of the disjunctive transcendentals.[231] Though the exact nature of the modal distinction for Scotus remains debated among his interpreters, the consensus is that, like the formal distinction, the modal distinction too has its basis *in re* antecedent to the operation of the intellect.[232] Accordingly, it remains the case that being is not contained even within its modal differences.

Scotus's position stands in marked contrast to Suárez, who insists that: "being, insofar as it is being, is intrinsically included in every being, and in the concept of every positive difference or real mode of being."[233] As Darge and Aertsen point out, in maintaining being's inclusion in its differences, Suárez represents a return to a pre-Scotistic conception of transcendentality.[234] Nevertheless, as Gracia observes, Suárez's transcendental perspective is innovative in its own right precisely in terms of its "inward" or "immanent" character as opposed to a merely extensional universality that went hand-in-hand with transcendental convertibility in the preceding tradition.[235] I discuss this in greater detail in what follows. More immediately, Suárez subjects Scotus's transcendental analysis to severe critique in *DM* 2.5 where the question arises whether the *ratio entis* transcends all natures (*rationes*) and contracting differences (*differentias inferiora*) so as to be intimately and essentially included in them. As already indicated, Suárez answers affirmatively, but before establishing that fact he has to confront Scotus's thesis, which, as we have seen, denies being's inclusion within its differences.

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228 Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 8, pars 1, q. 3, n. 139 (ed. Vatican, vol. 4, 222): "… non ut distinctio realitatis et realitatis sed ut distinctio realitatis et modi proprii et intrinseci eiusdem…." Cf. Wolter, *The Transcendentals*, 21-24; cf. Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens*, 125-40.

229 Scotus, *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis*, lib. 7, q. 19, a. 3, n. 28.

230 Ibid., n. 45 (Franciscan Institute, 370): "Istam differentiam [formalem] videtur necessarium ponere in aliis, puta in ente et eius passionibus, relatione et fudamento in Deo et creatura."

231 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 8, p. 1, q. 3, n. 138.

232 See, e.g., Wolter, *The Transcendentals*, 24-27; Hannes Möhle, *Formalitas und modus intrinsecus. Die Entwicklung der scotischen Metaphysik bei Franciscus Mayronis* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2007); Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 426-431.

233 *DM* 2.5.16 (vol. 25, 97): "… ens, in quantum ens, intrinsece includi in omni ente, et in omni conceptu positivae differentiae, aut modi entis realis."

234 See Aertsen, *Medieval Metaphysics as Transcendental Thought*, 632-33; Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), idem, "Suárez and Medieval Transcendental Thought," 75-84; 72.

235 Cf. Darge, "'Ens intime transcendit omnia,'" 151-52; Gracia, "Suarez and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals," *Topoi* 11 (1992): 123.

Suárez marshals a number of arguments against Scotus's transcendental perspective. Given the goals of the present chapter, I shall focus only on those arguments that emerge from Suárez's existential conception of being. We recall that being, for the Jesuit, is simply that which has a real essence.[236] Moreover, as indicated above, a real essence (= RE) is 'real' if it (RE1) does not involve self-repugnance and (RE2) if it is able to serve as a "root" (*radix*) of real operation or produce some effect.[237] Suárez further explains that what it is to be 'real' cannot ultimately be resolved in terms of being an effect, since God is a real being but is certainly the effect of nothing. Rather, to be 'real' must ultimately be understood as an aptitude to exist or as real existence.[238]

As Suárez sees it, in order for ultimate differences and modes to function as determinations of real being they must at least enjoy RE2. But if ultimate differences and modes have RE2, then, contrary to Scotus's thesis, the *ratio entis* must be contained within them. How this is so is clear from the following considerations. In the case of ultimate differences Suárez asks whether they intrinsically and quidditatively include being. If they do, being's immanent transcendence is conceded. If, however, one denies that differences contain being, then those differences would be unable to constitute a real essence—in the sense of RE2. If differences do not intimately contain being and are thus incapable of satisfying RE2, then there is no basis whereby to distinguish one being from another essentially since that in virtue of which something is constituted as RE is not given. In short, if differences do not include being, then they are simply nothing; but beings cannot be differentiated on the basis of nothing.[239]

What holds true for ultimate differences also holds for intrinsic modes. If modes were not real and positive (i.e., inclusive of being), how could they constitute the various real essences (RE) of things through which they could be distinguished from one another?[240] Suárez calls attention to the demands of RE2 and again asks whether modal determinations include being or not. If they do contain being, then modes are intrinsically and essentially being. (I shall explain in what sense shortly.) If it is the case that modes do not intrinsically contain being, as Scotus thinks, then the modes of being are incapable of satisfying RE2.[241] But if these modes are incapable of realizing RE2, then they cannot establish something as apt to exist nor would such modes be able to add anything to a superior determinable concept through which one arrives at a contracted real essence (RE).[242] "For if these modes are not being [*ens*], then they are nothing; therefore they can contribute nothing to

236 *DM* 2.4.5.
237 Ibid., 2.4.7.
238 Ibid.
239 Ibid., 2.5.6.
240 Ibid., 2.5.8.
241 Ibid.
242 Ibid.

the constitution of real essences."[243] How, after all, can that which has no being (i.e., a mode) constitute a real essence (RE) that is apt to exist (RE2)?

Suárez does entertain a counter-response to his critique of the Scotistic position. While being is not predicated *in quid* of ultimate differences and *passiones*, being can nevertheless be predicated *in quale* of those differences and modes. Suárez describes these same Scotistic determinations as *ens ut quod* and *ens ut quo* respectively. The objection is that, for Scotus, while being is not predicated of modes *in quid*, they are not entirely nothing (*omnino nihil*). The unstated implication here is that being is not contracted by nothing but by something. Suárez is not persuaded by this objection, which he thinks is simply a play on words (*solum in verbis consistere*). To be *ens ut quo* is nothing else than to be a form or a real act in something's metaphysical constitution. Again, what Suárez has in mind here is that any difference or mode must constitute RE as ultimately apt to exist (RE2). Accordingly, nothing is able to be a form or a real act of something unless it is something real.[244] Put simply, whatever enters into the metaphysical constitution of something must be real being (*ens reale*). Suárez concludes: "Therefore it is repugnant to say that something is real [*ens ut*] *quo*, and not *ens ut quod*, for that [*ens ut*] *quo*, should necessarily establish [*ens ut*] *quod*."[245] It is impossible to consider the metaphysical constituents of some being without thereby appreciating that they have some reality; for otherwise one could not conceive the complete essence as real in the sense of RE2. Accordingly, being must be contained in its own differences. Here, we see that, even in his critique of the Scotus, Suárez's thinking is governed by a consideration of being as that which is truly real—as something *existent*. The exigencies of thinkability or logical possibility alone do not determine how being is contracted to its *inferiora*.[246]

For Suárez, then, a compositional-conceptual or, what is the same, a *subjectum-proprietas* model, such as Scotus devises, is inadequate to accommodate the transcendental character of being because that model presupposes that being is not contained in its differences.[247] If, as Suárez maintains in *DM* 2.5, the *ratio entis* is "intimately" (*intime*) and "essentially" included within everything, a different transcendental model and means for contracting the *ratio entis* to its *inferiora* are required. That model will have to accommodate the two features of transcendentality that Suárez identifies, namely, its 'intimate' and 'essential' character. To say that being is 'essentially' transcendent suggests that being is not merely an accidental or contingent feature of any given reality (*x*). Rather, being's transcendence consists in

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[243] Ibid. (vol. 25, 95): "Et confirmatur, nam si hi modi non sunt ens, ergo nihil sunt; ergo nihil conferre possunt ad essentias reales constituendas."

[244] On this point cf. Darge, "Ens intime transcendit omnia,'" 165.

[245] *DM* 2.5.8 (vol. 25, 95): "… ergo repugnant dicere aliquid esse reale quo, et non ens ut quod, nam illud quo, in hujusmodi quod necessario fundari debet."

[246] This is not to suggest, though, that Scotus's position itself reduces to the thinkable.

[247] *DM* 2.5.18; cf. Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 603.

its being a necessary feature (or *ratio*) of *x* precisely insofar as *x* is being. With respect to being's intimate or immanent transcendence, Suárez seems to have in mind that the *ratio entis* will be included in the *ratio* of any real thing whatsoever. Gracia explains that one may understand this situation in terms of intension. Something (*x*) transcends another (*y*) only if the intension of *x* is essentially contained within the intension of *y*.[248] This may be necessary for Suárez's notion of transcendence but it is not sufficient. For example, the *ratio* 'animal' is essentially included and falls under the intension of any given species of animal. Nevertheless, it would be peculiar and a significant departure from the preceding metaphysical tradition if Suárez held that 'animal' is a transcendental, which he does not. To avoid such a conclusion, another feature of transcendentality is required, which is why Gracia explains that, for Suárez, something (*x*) is a transcendental only if the *ratio* of *x* is essentially included in the extension of any and every real being whatsoever.[249] Yet this account of transcendentality would seem to create a challenge for Suárez: how can one contract the *ratio entis* to its *inferiora* if that *ratio* is already contained within each being (as well as in its differences and modes) and is that in virtue of which they are all the same?

In *DM* 2.6 Suárez considers a number of potential solutions to the present difficulty, but, to his lights, none prove satisfactory except the thesis of conceptual resolution already alluded to regarding the difference between participial and nominal being. Only conceptual resolution can accommodate the immanent transcendental structure of being, for resolution does not turn upon conceptual composition, which is, as already noted, established on the basis of a distinction *ex natura rei*.[250] Rather, as Suárez describes it, one and the same thing can be known by different concepts that are both absolutely simple and more or less determinate in terms of their conceptual expressions.[251] So, for example, the individual being Socrates can be conceived either as a substance or as a being. Both propositions 'Socrates is a substance' and 'Socrates is a being' are true and only differ insofar as the former expresses Socrates in a more determinate fashion. Nevertheless, one cannot conceive Socrates as a substance without simultaneously understanding implicitly that he is a being. To conceive of Socrates as a being involves two things: first, conceiving Socrates as a being is to know him in a less determinate or express fashion than to know him as a substance; second, to conceive Socrates as a being is to know him precisely in terms of what he has in common (being) with all other real beings: namely, an order to existence. Unlike Scotus, Suárez does not think that the concept of substance is contracted by the addition of some distinct (*ex natura rei*) determining concept—here the mode of *perseitas* (i.e., existing in itself and not in some subject)—to an utterly determinable

248 Gracia, "Suárez and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals," 122-23.
249 Ibid., 122.
250 Cf. Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 604.
251 *DM* 2.3.9.

concept: being. One and the same being is known either in a more express fashion (i.e., the concept of substance) or in a less determinate way (i.e., the concept of being). That is to say, the concept of being already contains all its *inferiora*, "since everything that is conceived confusedly in that precisive concept, is discovered in that other object more expressly conceived, and in all that by whatever way it is considered."[252]

Suárez thinks that his account of conceptual resolution is consistent with Thomas Aquinas's own transcendental vision, which holds that "every nature is essentially being."[253] Suárez expands this claim to include differences and modes as well, for, as Thomas also sees it, to conceive a substance is not to juggle two distinct concepts (i.e., 'being' plus some determination) but simply to grasp being itself as it "expresses a special mode of being [*essendi*]."[254] Since the *ratio entis* is contained in all its differences and modes, one cannot help but conceive being itself in the consideration of all differences, albeit in a more express fashion. Suárez illustrates his account of conceptual resolution with a number of examples. When, for example, one divides quantity into 'bicubits,' 'tricubits,' etc., one cannot understand those quotients without also understanding quantity, albeit in some vague sense.[255] Likewise, were one to consider heat and some specific degree of heat (Suárez mentions "eight"), one understands that the common concept of heat is contained in every single degree of heat but in such a way that to speak of eight degrees of heat is not to conceive some complex concept. That is, one does not add the concept of a distinct mode (i.e., eighth degree) to the concept of heat in general to form the concept 'eight degrees of heat.' Rather, to think of 'eight degrees of heat' is simply to think of 'heat' itself but more expressly according to its determination in an individual being.[256] The same is true, Suárez argues, with respect to the various determinations of being. In the contraction of being to infinite being, for instance, one cannot think of 'infinite' as some (*ex natura rei*) distinct mode that would be added to being. Rather, to conceive of infinite being is just to conceive of being itself more expressly or determinately as infinite.

6. Conclusion

From what we have seen, Suárez's ultimate resolution of being occurs in terms of its relationship to existence. Why, then, should one be surprised that those same existential considerations govern his understanding of the manner in which the concept of being is both attained and contracted? As already noted, all beings (*entia*) agree

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[252] Ibid. (vol. 25, 101): "… quia totum id, quod confuse concipitur in illo conceptu praeciso, reperitur in alio objecto expressius concepto, et in toto illo, quacunque ratione consideretur."

[253] Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, vol. 22.2, 5): "… quaelibet natura est essentialiter ens…"; cf. Suárez, *DM* 2.6.8.

[254] Ibid. (ed. Leonine, vol. 22.2, 5): "… nomine substantiae exprimitur specialis quidam modus essendi…"; cf. Suárez, *DM* 2.6.8.

[255] *DM* 2.6.9.

[256] Ibid.

in existence.[257] Yet, existence is not some mere abstraction or empty concept, for it is realized and expressed in as many ways as being is encountered, from accidents to substances, from finite being to infinite being. Though existence is concretely as variegated as the beings it establishes into be-ing, those diverse beings nevertheless enter into a transcendental community through that same existence in which they agree. How could it be that Suárez's transcendental theory and its subservient method of conceptual resolution fail to accommodate such an existential structure? If an order to existence establishes being as real, then in the consideration of any real being its agreement in existence must be maintained, however confused, oblique, or indeterminate. In turning to a thing's existence, Suárez attempts to capture the ineffable and singular individual that is constituted through and in existence. But the intellect can only stutteringly grasp it in its own concepts, since concepts are at home in the otherwise accommodating universality of nature. Because thought is governed by being itself, it is not surprising that, in the consideration of any real thing, however specific or concretized, the thought of being should itself always form the muted but ever present horizon upon which distinct entities disclose their intelligible structures. Such is true for the Suárezian doctrine of being, which from beginning to end has existence as its consistent frame of reference.

Existence not only constitutes the adequate object of metaphysics as such (i.e., real being), it makes all things to be. "And therefore it is said that being itself [*ipsum esse*] is the perfection of all perfections, and the greatest perfection of all."[258] If Thomas Aquinas likewise holds that existence (*esse*) is the perfection of all perfections and actuality of all actualities[259]—on account of which someone such as Gilson finds therein a genuine existentialism—why should Suárez not be accorded the same sympathetic assessment? Of course, existence for Suárez is not an act distinct from a creature's essence into which it would be received and thereby determined to become this or that kind of thing.[260] One is hardly surprised that Suárez's conception of being is not identical to that of Thomas Aquinas. That fact alone, however, does not render Suárez's doctrine of being any less existential.

Indeed, Gilson's accusation of essentialism simply fails to appreciate the doctrinal divergences—which the French Thomist was always so keen to identify in order to differentiate various medieval thinkers from one another—that emerge between Thomas and Suárez. Yes, from within the Thomist paradigm, in which there is a real otherness between essence and existence, the question of metaphysical primacy ineluctably arises. And when that question regarding primacy is posed to Thomas,

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257 Ibid., 2.2.8.

258 Ibid., 31.13.23 (vol. 26, 306): "… ideo dicitur ipsum esse perfectio perfectionum omnium, et maxima omnium perfectionem."

259 See Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 4, a. 1, ad 3.

260 Cf. Thomas, *De potentia Dei*, q. 7, a. 2, ad 9.

his answer consistently and firmly comes down on the side of *esse ut actus essendi*.[261] It is one thing, however, to say that Thomas's metaphysics is existential because of its emphasis on the *actus essendi*; it is another thing to say that any metaphysical scheme which does not operate with the same paradigm falls short of being a true existentialism. Gilson, for one, is thoroughly convinced that Thomas has come closest to uncovering the truth about the existential structure of reality, and so utilizes the Angelic Doctor's thought as a "yardstick." One must be cautious, though, in applying the "yardstick of Thomism"[262] lest it should unwittingly become a procrustean bed. Who, after all, could meet such standards except Thomas Aquinas himself? Even some Thomists, Gilson thinks, have fallen short; how much worse, then, would a non-Thomist Jesuit fare? Should one utilize a Suárezian yardstick? However provocative the question might be, I concede it is not necessarily a philosophical one, for one cannot be allowed to make the feeble argument: Thomas does not give pride of place to *ens nominaliter sumptum* as that which has an *essentia realis*; therefore, he fails to reach the watermark of an authentic existential metaphysics.

Thomas is no Suárezian, nor could he be for obvious historical reasons, but the same should not be expected of the *Doctor eximius*—for philosophical reasons. Suárez, while sympathetic to the Angelic Doctor as an authority operating within his own Christian tradition, is certainly no Thomist, *pace* Hellín, but it does not follow therefrom that he is existence-blind.[263] As we have seen, for Suárez, the root of being (*ens*), and indeed the root of its very intelligibility, is simply existence. If that which exists is something created, then it emerges into being, not out of some preexistent, shadowy essence, but through the absolute power of God. Suárez's metaphysics is thoroughly committed to the Christian doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*. The creator-God, as Suárez knows and affirms, is by no means the Avicennian *dator formarum* nor the creator of existentially inert essences. God is the creator of that which exists because He is existence Himself. Suárez's existential account of being aims to articulate that sublime mystery.

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[261] See, e.g., Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 3, a. 4; *De ente et essentia*, c. 4; *SCG* II, c. 52.

[262] See Gilson, *God and Philosophy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1941), xi–xii.

[263] By saying that "Suárez is no Thomist" I do not intend to suggest that Suárez stands in an antagonistic relationship to Thomas Aquinas. Indeed, one passage found in the *De gratia* celebrates Thomas as unparalleled among Christian doctors and theologians. See *De gratia*, prol. 6, c. 6, n. 28. Nevertheless, sympathy and appreciation are far from discipleship and partisan adherence. Rather than a reflection of some personal commitment, Suárez's encomium of the Angelic Doctor in that passage may be more out of fidelity to the Jesuit *Ratio Studiorum*, which held that in matters of theology Thomas Aquinas was to be given pride of place. See Fichter, *Francis Suarez: Man of Spain* (New York, NY: MacMillan Company, 1940), 140-41.

Chapter Three

The Transcendentality of Being

My goal has been to demonstrate that Francisco Suárez's doctrine of being is 'realist,' 'existential,' and 'transcendental.' I have also argued that these three designations are interrelated but ultimately stem from being's existential character. What makes a real being 'real' is the fact that it is "ordered to existence [*esse*] and real actual entity" without which being cannot be understood.[1] Further, since existence is that in which all beings agree and that in virtue of which they are real or apt to exist,[2] existence also serves as the basis for being's transcendental community. What is more, as Suárez sees it, given that being is contained within its differences and *inferiora*, transcendence consists in being's immanent presence in all real beings.[3] In the course of establishing these points, I have already had occasion to touch upon—even if only in passing—the transcendental character of being. An explicit consideration of that character is now in order for two main reasons. First, certain features of Suárez's transcendental *explicatio entis* seem to forestall the possibility of constructing metaphysics as a 'science'—in the Aristotelian sense of the term. Yet, Suárez explicitly commits himself to the construction of a scientific metaphysics. Second, a number of recent interpreters have seized upon Suárez's particular understanding of transcendentality to argue that he expels any consideration of existence therefrom.

Regarding the latter point, Rolf Darge points out that there have been two main interpretive trends. Though differing in motive and strategy, both trends converge upon the conclusion that Suárez functions as a proto-Enlightenment thinker in his transcendental speculations who shifts metaphysics away from a consideration of real being to an onto-logic that culminates in the "tinological" representation of being as a thought-object.[4] The first trend is represented by Jean-François Courtine and the second by interpreters such as Jorge Gracia and Jorge Uscatescu Barrón.[5] In the immediately preceding chapter, I showed how Courtine locates Suárez's doctrine of being on an ontological trajectory that passes through Duns Scotus, Henry of Ghent, and back to Avicenna's "essential neutrality" (*neutralité essentielle*).[6] To

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[1] Suárez, *DM* 2.4.14 (vol. 25, 92): "Quod vero essentia aut quidditas realis sit, intelligi non potest sine ordine ad esse et realem entitatem actualem…."

[2] Ibid., 2.2.8.

[3] Ibid., 2.5.

[4] Cf. Jean-François Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1990), 536-37.

[5] Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 115-18. Needless to say, interpretations of Suárez's place in the history of metaphysics are legion but the interpreters just mentioned serve as the outer boundaries of the Suárez-*Forschung*, as it were.

[6] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 373.

Courtine's lights, "The structure of Avicenna's *Metaphysics* remains the determining element of the Suárezian construction."[7] A central element of that structure, which would play a profound role in subsequent metaphysical speculations, is, as we saw, *res* in the sense of *ratitudo*, from which existence is allegedly excluded as "accidental." What is more, since *res* can also be taken in the sense of *reor*, *reri* ('I think,' 'to think') the ultimate resolution of being understood in this latter sense of *res* occurs in terms of the thinkable, which adumbrated so many early modern ontologies, especially those of Johannes Clauberg and Clemens Timpler.[8] This same dynamic, as Courtine sees it, is at play in Suárez's transcendental *explicatio entis*, which represents a decisive moment (*le "moment Suarez"*) within the broader history of metaphysics in which there is a "turn" ("*le tournant suarézien*") from a realist metaphysics—attuned to the act of being (*actus essendi*)—to a representationalist ontology which portrays being as that which is thinkable (*cogitabile*) and thereby leads to the *Schulmetaphysik* of early modernity and ultimately to the Kantian *Gegenstand überhaupt*.[9]

With respect to the structure of Suárez's transcendental theory itself, Courtine argues that there is a continuity—if not outright identity—between Duns Scotus's transcendental doctrine and that of Suárez. Despite the fact that there are certain "formulations" within the Suárezian account that appear contradictory to Scotus's doctrine, Courtine insists that Suárez, in essence, resumes the Scotistic project.[10] Overcoming the "contradictory formulations" between Suárez and Scotus, however, requires a remarkable set of interpretive maneuvers with which Courtine dazzles his reader. In a similar vein and without denying Suárez's own originality, Olivier Boulnois maintains that between Duns Scotus and Suárez there are only "regional and superficial oppositions" on specific doctrinal points, and that there remains an abiding "structural foundation" shared between the two.[11] One is left wondering, though, whether such assessments leave hidden and obscure what someone such as

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[7] Ibid., 387: "La structure de la *Métaphysique* d'Avicenne reste l'élément déterminant de la construction suarézienne…." I shall discuss what is at issue in Avicenna's doctrine of essence in relation to Suárez's doctrine of being vis-à-vis possibility in the next chapter.

[8] Clauberg identifies metaphysics or ontology as a universal science that is structured transcendentally. He thinks, however, that the nature of being that such an ontology pursues is taken in the sense of the "intelligible" or *"ens cogitabile"* which is broader than real being. See Clauberg, *Metaphysica de ente seu Ontosophia* (Amsterdam, 1664), c. 1. Earlier, after noting the controversy on the topic, Timpler had identified the "proper and adequate subject" of metaphysics as the "πᾶν νοητόν," that is to say, the "*omne intelligibile*." Important to note, such a consideration of being extends well beyond real being. See Timpler, *Metaphysicae systema methodicum* (Hannover, 1616), metaphysicae lib. 1, c. 1, problema 5 (fols. 6-8).

[9] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 5. On the *Schulmetaphysik* see Max Wundt, *Die deutsche Schulmetaphysik des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1939). For Kant, see *Kritik der Reinen Vernuft*, A290/B347.

[10] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 376.

[11] Boulnois, *Être et représentation: Une généalogie de la métaphysique moderne à l'époque de Duns Scot (XIIIe-XIVe siècle)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999), 480.

Courtine sets out to unmask, namely, the distinctiveness of the purported "Suárezian turn." As I stated in the Introduction to the present volume, my concern has been to allow Suárez to speak for himself and in his own terms. If Gilson has perpetrated a certain degree of hermeneutic violence upon Suárez by measuring him against the yardstick of Thomism, the situation is not improved by using a Scotistic rule. Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that Courtine's interpretation has had considerable influence upon many, not only upon Boulnois but also upon the Spanish scholar Víctor Sanz, who views Suárez's reduction of the two transcendentals *res* and *aliquid* to being (*ens*) as further support for Courtine's general narrative of the transition of metaphysics into an onto-logic.[12] If *aliquid* is understood as "not-nothing" (*non nihil*), then it is simply what can be thought without contradiction. For Sanz, this means that Suárez, who reduces *aliquid* to being, shifts metaphysics towards the thinkable from which any existential reference is excised.

While Courtine and those who follow in his wake approach Suárez in terms of a broader history of the shift from medieval metaphysics to modern ontology, others such as Gracia and Uscatescu Barrón are more concerned to evaluate the Suárezian transcendental theory in terms of its own inner structure and coherence (or lack thereof).[13] Noting the particular challenges that constructing a transcendental metaphysics in terms of an Aristotelian science presents, Gracia points out that Suárez is precariously forced onto a metaphysical cantilever, so to speak, that can only support itself at the cost of enervating the intrinsic value of the transcendental attributes. Given Suárez's commitment to the thesis that being is immanently and essentially included within its differences,[14] any difference *ex natura rei* between being and its transcendental attributes is precluded. Accordingly, if a difference between being and its attributes is introduced, it can only be on the basis of reason. In the case of *unum*, what is at issue is a negation, whereas *bonum* and *verum* are matters of extrinsic denomination.[15] Yet, Uscatescu claims that explaining the transcendental attributes of being through negations and extrinsic denominations, which are not real beings but *entia rationis*,[16] constitutes an abiding "paradox" in the Suárezian metaphysics.[17] Similarly, while Gracia acknowledges that Suárez does not

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[12] Sanz, "La reducción suareciana de los trascendentales," *Anuario Filosófico* 25 (1992): 403-20.

[13] See Jorge Gracia, "Suárez and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals," *Topoi* II (1992): 121-33; idem, "The Transcendental Attributes of Being in Scholasticism and Modernity: Suárez and Kant," in, ed. Jan Aertsen and Andreas Speer, *Was ist Philosophie im Mittelalter?* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1998), 213-25. Jorge Uscatescu Barrón, "Acerca de la unidad. Un estudio sobre las Disputationes Metaphysicae de Suárez," *Endoxa* 3 (1994), 195-223.

[14] See *DM* 2.5.

[15] *DM* 3.1.11.

[16] Ibid., 54.1.4-7; ibid., 54.2.15.

[17] Barrón, "Acerca de la unidad," 199-200, 205. It seems, here, that Barrón is not so much concerned with Suárez's appeal to negation and extrinsic denomination per se since these are utilized with respect to God in natural theology. Rather, Barrón understands negations and extrinsic denomination in the case of Suárez's transcendental explication to be problematic precisely because there they func-

view the transcendental attributes of being as mere *ficta*,[18] he nevertheless holds that "the transcendental attributes of being are ways in which we conceive and think."[19] It would seem that there is in fact some basis for attributing a "mentalist turn" to Suárez, who "eroded the realistic metaphysical framework of the Middle Ages, giving it a new direction toward the knowing and desiring subject."[20] How could one draw any other conclusion? If metaphysics is a science that examines real being together with its properties and if those properties, in turn, are merely extrinsic denominations or negations, then metaphysics would seem to be concerned, at least in part, with the non-real or with thought-objects.[21] Though different in tenor, Gracia's conclusions are largely coterminous with those of Courtine.

These competing interpretations of Suárez's transcendental theory, if true, obviously undermine the fundamental thesis of the present volume. I intend to show how they miss important and indeed decisive features of Suárez's transcendental *explicatio entis*. Here, Rolf Darge's work is particularly helpful as a corrective to Courtine's efforts to create a narrative in which Suárez is responsible for the dissolution of metaphysics and its anamorphosis into an onto-logic, that is to say, the reduction of being to mere logical coherence or possibility and thus to thinkability. As noted in the previous chapter, Darge views Suárez's transcendental doctrine as fundamentally pre-Scotistic and in league with the transcendental doctrines of thinkers such as Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus, and even Philip the Chancellor.[22] While tracing the historical development of transcendentality among these figures is critically important for the purposes of identifying the specificity of the Suárezian project, my immediate concern is to show that Suárez's transcendental doctrine remains faithful to—and indeed flows from—the metaphysical determinations I addressed in the preceding chapters. In what follows, I argue that Suárez's transcendental doctrine remains attuned to the existential structure of being.

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tion as *entia rationis*, which is to say, 'non-being.' But, as he complains: "¿No resulta contradictoria que entes de razón sean notas del ser real en general? ¿Cómo puede la nada describir al ser?" (200).

[18] Gracia, "Suárez and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals," 126. See *DM* 3.1.10 where Suárez argues that the transcendental attributes are not "fabricated" by the mind.

[19] Gracia, "The Ontological Status of the Transcendental Attributes," 224.

[20] Gracia, "Suárez and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals," 131.

[21] For the scholastics, 'attributes,' '*passiones*,' and 'properties' are often used interchangeably. They denote what follows necessarily from the nature of some subject. Since what is at issue here is being, the *passiones entis* are what follow from being as such. That said, sometimes certain scholastics do introduce distinctions among them. For instance, Rodrigo de Arriaga and Stephanus Chauvin describe 'attributes' as being only rationally distinct from their subjects. '*Passiones*,' in contrast, are really distinct from their subjects. Suárez, however, seems to use *passio*, attribute, and property synonymously. Sometimes they really differ from their subjects and, at other times, they only differ according to reason. See *DM* 3.1.5. For Arriaga, see *Cursus philosophicus*, Metaph., disp. 1, sec. 2, n. 18 (Lyon, 1669). For Chauvin, see *Lexicon Rationale sive thesaurus philosophicus* (Rotterdam, 1792), s.v. "*Attributum*."

[22] Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 129-32.

1. The Transcendental Explication of Being

1.1 *Ratio Dubitandi*: The Challenge to Transcendental Science

Suárez begins his discussion of the transcendental attributes of being (*passiones entis*) with the recognition that, as Aristotle teaches in the *Posterior Analytics*,[23] the task of any science is to demonstrate the necessary attributes of its subject matter.[24] If it is the case that metaphysics is a science—as the entire preceding medieval and scholastic traditions hold—then it too should demonstrate the attributes (i.e., the transcendentals) that follow upon being. But the vexing question here is whether being can have any properties or attributes in the first place. Suárez's earlier critique in *DM* 2.5 of the Scotistic claim that being is distinct *ex natura rei* from its attributes functions as a double-edged sword that swings back threateningly against his own project. If it is the case that being is immanently contained within its differences and attributes, there would be no distinct attribute or property that could be demonstrated of being for each attribute would already be being itself. If no distinct property can be demonstrated of being, then it would seem that being cannot function as the subject of any science. Metaphysics, in short, would be scientifically impossible. To determine the exact parameters of the problem, Suárez identifies four necessary conditions required for something to be a 'real property' (=RP):

> RP1: The property itself must be some thing (*aliqua res*), for, if it were nothing, there would be no way for it to function as a real property.
> RP2: There must be a distinction *ex natura rei* between the property and its subject, for if the property were entirely the same as the subject, it would simply be part of the subject's essence.
> RP3: The property must be convertible with its subject.
> RP4: The subject is not intrinsically and essentially included in the definition of the property.[25]

Of the four conditions, the only one that the Suárezian doctrine of being seems *prima facie* capable of accommodating is RP1, but even then only with some difficulties as we shall shortly see.[26] RP1 demands that a property be "some thing" (*aliqua res*), which I take to mean that it must be real as opposed to non-being or a fiction. This would be consistent with Suárez's understanding of *res* taken in the metaphysically determinate sense of R1 or *res a ratitudine*.[27] Suárez himself suggests as much when

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[23] Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 1.4.

[24] *DM* 3.prol. Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 3.2.997a1-15.

[25] Ibid., 3.1.1. Here, Suárez is only reporting the criteria for a real property as found in the Aristotelian tradition that preceeded him. It is not the case that he himself will accept these criteria *tout court*, for he will have to modify them to accommodate the transcendental character of metaphysics. For Aristotle's own thought regarding real properties see *Posterior Analytics* 1.4.73a34-73b5; *Metaphysics* 4.2.1004b10-17; idem, 7.5.1031a2-14; idem, 5.9.1018a12-13; idem, 10.3.1054b25-27.

[26] Jorge Gracia thinks that ultimately Suárez's transcendental account fails to accommodate RP1. I shall discuss his reasons for that claim below as well as why I think he misunderstands Suárez's point. For Gracia, see "Suárez and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals," 127.

[27] See ch. 2, p. 98 supra.

he insists that non-being or fictions cannot be real attributes.[28] RP1 dovetails nicely with Suárez's argument from *DM* 2.5, which he explicitly references in the present passage, that being is intrinsically and essentially included within anything that is real,[29] for "nothing can be real, which intrinsically and essentially is not real being."[30] Yet, in satisfying RP1 the Suárezian doctrine of being seems to run afoul of the remaining requirements. If being is intrinsically and essentially included within anything real—including any putative properties—then being would pertain to the very essence of those properties, which conflicts with RP4. Furthermore, the demand for a distinction *ex natura rei* between a subject and its property, which RP2 requires, is equally problematic since anything that is essentially being cannot be *ex natura rei* distinct from being.[31] RP3 does not fare any better, for if something is essentially being yet is not being in common (*ens in communi*), then it is a subordinate being (i.e., a type or a kind of being). But no specific kind of being can be convertible with being itself. Finally, though Suárez's account of being satisfies RP1, any transcendental doctrine predicated thereupon would seem to succumb to an infinite regress. That is, imagine some being (*b*); if *b* has certain attributes (say, *x*, *y*, and *z*) insofar as *b* is being, then *b* necessarily has those properties (*x*, *y*, and *z*). But, given Suárez's claim that being is contained in its differences and attributes, *x*, *y*, and *z* must also be beings and have all the same attributes of being, namely, *x'*, *y'*, and *z'*. Similarly, *x'*, *y'*, *z'* would be being and necessarily possess their own attributes *x''*, *y''*, and *z''* and so on *ad infinitum*.[32] In short, the subject-property model that Aristotle develops does not appear capable of supporting a transcendental account of being, at least not as Suárez envisions it.

Yet, as we saw in the previous chapter, such a subject-property-based model was what drove Duns Scotus to defend his thesis that being is not predicted *in quid* of its ultimate differences or attributes. The transcendental attributes of being are added to being as determining features and thus satisfy RP2. It is remarkable, then, that Courtine holds that, despite Suárez's claim to develop a "middle position" between the transcendental theories of Thomas and Duns Scotus, the Jesuit's transcendental theory actually treads along the same path and in the same direction as that of Scotus.[33] While it is true that RP1 through RP4 correspond to almost the same set of conditions for properties according to which Scotus develops his own

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[28] *DM* 3.1.1.

[29] Ibid., 2.5.16.

[30] Ibid., 3.1.1 (vol. 25, 103): "… nam, ut supra contra Scotum probatum est, nihil potest esse reale, quod intrinsece et essentialiter ens reale non sit."

[31] In *DM* 7 Suárez identifies different kinds of distinction. What is foundational to a distinction *ex natura rei*, whether it be realized in a real distinction, a formal distinction, etc., is that there is a basis for the distinction within the thing itself (*in re*) antecedent to any operation of the intellect.

[32] *DM* 3.1.1.

[33] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 366.

subjectum-proprietas transcendental model,[34] within the Suárezian project they represent a true dilemma. What that means is that, as Darge suggests, the Scotistic transcendental doctrine will, to Suárez's lights, require revision.[35]

If the Scotistic transcendental *explicatio entis* is too problematic for Suárez, the Thomistic insight that "being does not have real positive properties" might serve as the key that unlocks the solution to the *ratio dubitandi*. For Thomas, at least as Suárez reads him, anything that is "added" to being is added in the fashion of "some negation or relation to reason."[36] That is to say, what is added is nothing positive that is distinct *ex natura rei* from being. This is a clever way to avoid the obstacle that RP2 poses for transcendental science. Of course, how that Thomistic insight navigates the difficulties that RP1 through RP4 present and allows being to be a subject through which a metaphysical science can be established, Suárez confesses, "requires explanation." Nevertheless, he remains committed to the notion that "the foundation of this opinion is … strictly true."[37] Such an admission would be bizarre for one who is allegedly of one mind with Duns Scotus.

Nevertheless, Courtine complains that Suárez's claim that only a negation or a relation is added to being results in the fact that "the concept of a *passio entis* loses all its meaning."[38] To satisfy the four requirements for a property that Suárez identifies "one must be able to think the Scotist thesis without contradiction."[39] That thesis, moreover, stands in direct opposition to that which Suárez finds favorable, for Scotus maintains that "being has real and positive properties that are *ex natura rei* distinct from it, which are not, however, in themselves intrinsically and essentially beings."[40] While the Scotistic thesis has the benefit of satisfying RP2 by marking a distinction *ex natura rei* between being and its attributes, it is not immediately evident how it can preserve RP1. Courtine thinks the ultimate solution to that problem is to be found in Scotus's claim that being is "virtually included" in its properties,[41] "for every attribute of being [*passiones entis*] is included in being and in its inferiors virtually."[42]

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34 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 3, nn. 131-36.

35 Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 119.

36 *DM* 3.1.4 (vol. 25, 104): "… ens non habere reales passiones positivas; sed omnia illa, quae attribuntur enti tanquam passiones ejus, addere ipsi enti solum negationem aliquam, vel respectum rationis."

37 Ibid. (vol. 25, 104): "Fundamentum hujus sententiae explicatum est in ratione dubitandi in principio posita, et in rigore est vera, indiget tamen explicatione."

38 Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 367: "Mais n'est-ce pas alors le concept même de *passio entis* qui perd tout son sens?"

39 Ibid, 368: "… il faut pouvoir penser sans contradiction la thèse scotiste…."

40 *DM* 3.1.2 (vol. 24, 103): "… ens habere reales et positivas proprietates ex natura rei ab ipso distinctas, quae tamen in se intrinsece et essentialiter entia non sunt."

41 Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 374.

42 Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 3, n. 137 (ed. Vatican, vol. 3, 85): "… omnes passiones entis includuntur in ente et in suis inferioribus virtualiter."

1.2 Suárez's Transcendental Solution

Courtine's appeal to virtual inclusion may very well represent Scotus's solution to the difficulties confronting the Franciscan's construction of metaphysics as a transcendental science, but it is by no means clear that it is Suárez's own solution, to say nothing of whether or not the Scotistic position itself is coherent. In light of three theses that Suárez subsequently defends to establish his own transcendental theory, it becomes clear that the *subjectum-proprietas* model—so central to Scotus's doctrine—is inadequate for Suárez's transcendental purposes. These theses (=T) are as follows:

> T1: Being as being cannot have true and entirely real attributes [*passiones*] that are distinct *ex natura rei* from it.[43]
> T2: Being insofar as it is being has some properties or attributes that are not constructed [*conficta*] by reason, but are true and in the thing itself of which they are predicated.[44]
> T3: The attributes of being formally add either a negation or a denomination taken from a relation to something extrinsic.[45]

Suárez's fundamental opposition to Scotus's transcendental approach emerges clearly with the first thesis (T1).[46] Courtine attempts to ameliorate this apparent antagonism by turning to the role that *res* and *realitas* play in the Suárezian metaphysics. These notions link Suárez to Scotus and through him to Henry of Ghent and ultimately Avicenna.[47] As we saw in the previous chapter, however, attempting to identify Suárez's own understanding of *res tout court* with what Avicenna and Henry of Ghent espouse is problematic to say the least. What is more, shifting focus and the discussion to *res* abandons Suárez's own presentation of his transcendental doctrine. While that doctrine does take account of *res*, that fact is hardly surprising given that *res* was traditionally numbered among the six transcendentals (viz., *res*,

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[43] *DM* 3.1.8 (vol. 25, 105): "… dico primo ens ut ens non posse habere veras et omnino reales passiones positivas ex natura rei ab ipso distinctas."

[44] Ibid., 3.1.10 (vol. 25, 106): "Dico secundo, ens in quantum ens habere aliquas proprietates seu attributa, quae non sunt per rationem conficta, sed vere et in re ipsa de illo praedicantur."

[45] Ibid., 3.1.11 (vol. 25, 106): "Dico tertio: haec attributa entis de formali addunt vel negationem, vel denominationem sumptam per habitudinem ad aliquid extrinsecum…."

[46] In clear amazement, Darge points out that Courtine misrepresents the actual text of Suárez and therefore the Suárezian transcendental doctrine. (Darge, *Suárez' trannzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 121-22.) In his quotation of Suárez's first thesis, Courtine leaves out the word '*non*' such that the passage from *DM* 3.1.8 reads as follows: "Dico primo quod ens ut ens posse habere veras et omnino *reales* passiones *positivas* ex natura rei ab ipso distinctas" (Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 376). Presented in this fashion without the qualifying '*non*' Suárez's position would be identical to Scotus who does think that being can have really distinct attributes. I think, however, that Darge overemphasizes what is just a typographical—rather than interpretive—error. In what immediately follows within Courtine's text, he admits that Suárez's first thesis is "rigorously contradictory to the Scotistic thesis" ("rigoureusement le contre-pied de la thèse scotiste"). This would hardly make sense if Courtine actually thought Suárez maintained that being could have attributes that are really distinct from it.

[47] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 376.

ens, *unum*, *bonum*, *aliquid*, *verum*). It is far from the case, however, that the nature of *res* determines or shapes Suárez's understanding of the structure of transcendentality itself. I shall return to Courtine's claim regarding the Suárezian conception of *res* and *realitas* later when discussing the Jesuit's enumeration of the different transcendentals. For now, in order to appreciate Suárez's own transcendental doctrine, I examine how he establishes T1-T3 in order to overcome the *ratio dubitandi* and establish metaphysics as a transcendental science.

T1 aims to mitigate the force of RP2 in its requirement that a property be distinct *ex natura rei* from its subject. While it might be the case that some demonstrations involve properties that are in fact distinct *ex natura rei* from their subjects, it is not necessarily the case that *all* demonstrations require such a distinction. A particular kind of being (*tale ens*) can have attributes that are distinct *ex natura rei* but that is only because the extension of the property is not the same as the extension of its subject.[48] Here, the classic example is risibility with respect to a human being. Being insofar as it is being (*ens in quantum ens*), however, includes or extends to the nature of any being whatsoever. This follows from Suárez's claim that being is intrinsically and essentially included in all its differences, modes, attributes, etc., for without being nothing is real. The immanent transcendence of being is, for Suárez, the "most powerful foundation" (*potissimum fundamentum*) for T1 and therefore no attribute "can be distinct *ex natura rei* from being."[49]

The upshot of T1 is that RP2, which again proceeds on the basis of a subject-property model, is revealed as inadequate for the purposes of accommodating Suárez's conception of being in the construction of a transcendental science. Accordingly, a new model is required that can (a) introduce some kind of distinction between being and its attributes without (b) thereby introducing a distinction *ex natura rei*. In order to develop a solution to this problem Suárez explains that it is one thing for an attribute to be distinct *ex natura rei* from its subject, but it is a different thing altogether for something to be merely "conceived" or "explicated" after the fashion of a property.[50] In the latter case, what is at issue is a distinction that emerges from reason. The distinction among the divine perfections illustrates well what Suárez has in mind. Like many medieval and late scholastic theologians, Suárez is committed to the thesis of divine simplicity,[51] but this thesis does not preclude the

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[48] Gracia, "Suárez and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals," 126. Cf. Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 1.4.73a34-73b5; *Metaphysics* 7.5.1031a2-5.

[49] *DM* 3.1.8 (vol. 25, 105): "… ens autem inquantum ens non potest esse extra essentiam alicujus entis; et ideo nulla proprietas vel passio potest esse realis, quin in ea essentialiter includatur ens; et ideo non potest esse ex natura rei distincta ab ente…."

[50] Ibid., 3.1.5 (vol. 5, 104): "… aliud vero concipi, explicari, et praedicari a nobis per modum passionis, seu proprietatis…."

[51] For Suárez on divine simplicity see *DM* 30.4. One of the consequences of Scotus's transcendental theory is that a robust notion of divine simplicity must be abandoned. Daniel Heider rightly laments that this is one of the most "regrettable and needless outcomes of the Scotistic thesis." See Heider, "Is

multiplication of divine attributes (e.g., 'good,' 'wise,' 'merciful,' 'just,' etc.). These attributes are multiplied or distinguished from one another because the intension of each attribute does not coincide with the intension of the other attributes.[52] What 'wisdom' as predicated of God formally expresses, for example, is something other than what 'mercy' expresses. Yet, the distinction between 'wisdom' and 'mercy' does not correspond to a distinction *ex natura rei* within the divine being itself.[53] The distinction between God and the divine attributes as well as the distinction among the attributes themselves comes about entirely through reason (*distinctio rationis*).[54]

As Suárez sees it, a *distinctio rationis* "is not formally and actually in things, which are denominated as distinct just as they exist in themselves, but only as they halt [*substant*] our concepts and accept some denomination from them [i.e., our concepts]."[55] Furthermore, this kind of distinction comes about as a result of our inadequate or confused grasp of some object. In the present context it is the inadequate or confused grasp of being itself that gives rise to its diverse transcendental considerations as will be explained below.[56] In the previous chapter we saw how Suárez makes use of his notion of conceptual resolution in order to account for the manner in which being is contracted to its *inferiora*.[57] It is not the case that some difference or mode is added to being after the fashion of a determining property, as Scotus had taught. Rather, the consideration of a particular being comes about through the resolution of the concept of being into an "*expressior conceptus*." Suárez appeals to the same mechanism here and offers as an example quantity in relation to equality and inequality. Both equality and inequality are properties of quantity, yet neither adds something to quantity that is not essentially already quantity itself. That is to say, neither equality nor inequality are distinct *ex natura rei* from quantity, for neither is other than quantity itself. The difference that obtains between quantity and equality or inequality emerges entirely from our reasoning with respect to the less distinct concept 'quantity' and the more distinct (*expressior*) concepts 'equality' or 'inequality.'[58]

Suárez's Concept of Being Analogical or Univocal?" *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 81 (2007): 33, n. 45.

52 Cf. Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 13, a. 4.

53 One might point out that the matter is not so clear with respect to creatures, given the debates between the realists and the nominalists concerning objective precision and formal precision, respectively. Without entering into the details of this debate, which, as I indicated earlier, Suárez by and large avoided, what is of concern here is not whether *rationes* describing a creature's being are distinct *ex natura rei*. The point, rather, is that a rational distinction is precisely the kind of distinction that can yield two distinct *rationes* that are not distinct in the thing itself.

54 *DM* 3.1.5.

55 Ibid., 7.1.4 (vol. 25, 251): "Et est illa quae formaliter et actualiter non est in rebus, quae sic distinctae denominantur prout in se, sed solum prout substant conceptibus nostris et ab eis denominationem aliquam accipiunt."

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid., 2.6.

58 Ibid., 7.1.4.

Although the distinction between being and its transcendental attributes arises from an act of reason, Suárez is sure to point out that it does not thereby follow that the transcendental attributes themselves are merely beings of reason or *ficta*. To speak of goodness, truth, and unity is not the same as speaking of *hircocervi* and square-circles (i.e., *entia rationis*), but it is to speak about what is truly real. To ensure the real character of the transcendental attributes, Suárez develops his second thesis (T2), which holds that the transcendental attributes of being "are not merely fabricated through reason [*per rationem conficta*] but are truly in the thing itself of which they are predicated."[59] After all, it is the task of metaphysics, Suárez reminds his reader, to demonstrate what pertains to being and not what pertains to some *ficta*.[60] Whereas beings of reason only have *esse objectivum* (i.e., being in the intellect), and even then only for as long as they are considered by the intellect, the transcendental attributes "absolutely and prior to every consideration of the intellect agree [*conveniunt*] with being itself."[61]

The consideration of the transcendentals comes about "not through the conception of some fictitious entity that is not real"[62] but as a result of the "inadequate conception" of some true thing (*veram rem*). It is one thing, then, for the transcendental attributes to be truly real and another for them to be distinguished by reason.[63] Suárez's clarification of the entitative status of the transcendentals serves as a counterpoint to Scotus's claim that the transcendental attributes "are distinguished from one another formally and quidditatively, as well as from being… otherwise metaphysics's inferring these attributes from being and considering them would not be a real science."[64] If Suárez turns to reason's act of distinguishing in order to introduce a distinction between being and its attributes and thereby meet—at least to a certain degree[65]—the demands of RP2, it is not the case that he has reduced the transcendental attributes to mere mental objects. I shall return to this topic

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[59] Ibid., 3.1.10 (vol. 25, 106): "… ens in quantum ens habere aliquas proprietates seu attributa, quae non sunt per rationem conficta, sed vere et in re ipsa de illo praedicantur."

[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid. (vol. 25, 106): "[haec attributa] absolute et ante omnem intellectus considerationem enti ipsi conveniunt…."

[62] Ibid., 3.1.6 (vol. 25, 104): "… non est per conceptionem alicujus fictae entitatis, quae non sit in re…."

[63] See Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 607.

[64] Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* II, d. 16, q. un., n. 17 (ed. Vivès, vol. 13, 43a-b): "… distinguuntur tamen ab invicem formaliter et quidditative, et etiam ab ente… aliter Metaphysica concludens tales passiones de ente, et illas considerans, non esset scientia realis."

[65] I say here "to some degree" because RP2, as it stands, cannot, at least to Suárez's mind, accommodate a truly transcendental science on account of the fact that being is contained within its differences. If being is contained within its differences, then it cannot be *ex natura rei* distinct from them. Thus, while RP2 demands a distinction *ex natura rei*, Suárez thinks it is enough for the sake of preserving a science to proceed in terms of a *rational* distinction. In short, Suárez has to emend RP2 in order to accommodate a transcendental science.

below when confronting Gracia's and Uscatescu's claims that the transcendentals, on Suárez's reckoning, have only an intramental status.

Finally, with T3 Suárez explains the exact mental mechanisms through which the various transcendental attributes of being are distinguished from being. The transcendental attributes do not add some reality or perfection that is distinct *ex natura rei* from being to being itself but only add a negation or an extrinsic denomination. This transcendental approach has its basis in Aristotle's remark within *Metaphysics* 4.2 that, though being and one (*unum*) are the same in nature or in reality, they do not formally signify the same thing.[66] In the present context, Suárez does not say exactly what being (*ens*) signifies, but this is presumably because in *DM* 2.4 he already explained that *ens* signifies an order to existence. *Unum*, however, does not signify this order to existence but signifies a negation, namely, the lack of division. Similarly, in the consideration of *bonum* and *verum*, while they too are really the same (*in re*) as being, they do not signify an order to existence (as does *ens*) nor do they signify a negation as in the case of *unum*. Rather, they signify being in relation to something else. *Bonum* signifies being in relation to the will as something loved, and *verum* signifies being in relation to the intellect as something known.[67] Suárez reports that this is just the same doctrine that Thomas Aquinas had taught, which, as Darge suggests, represents the resumption of a pre-Scotistic transcendental attitude.[68] How continuous the Suárezian doctrine really is with that of Thomas remains to be seen. For now, we note that the transcendental attributes, though identical with being in reality, are not synonymous with being, otherwise "it would be nugatory to say that being [*ens*] is one or good."[69] In short, the transcendentals have the same extension as being since they are really identical with being, but, because they formally signify diverse things, the transcendental attributes do not have the same intension as being, which means they are (rationally) distinct.

With these three theses in place, one may ask whether Suárez manages to overcome the *ratio dubitandi* that emerged as a consequence of what was required for something to be a real property. We see that, because the transcendental attributes are co-extensive with being, RP3 is satisfied; but, insofar as being and its attributes are different in intension, RP4 is accommodated.[70] Nevertheless, Gracia contends that, while RP2 is partly satisfied, RP1 "is not fulfilled at all, since it states that properties are supposed to be something real in themselves, and the transcendental attributes do not appear to be anything other than being except intensionally."[71] Gracia's contention is difficult to maintain in light of Suárez's repeated claim that

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66 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 4.2.1003b24-35.
67 *DM* 3.1.11.
68 Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 122, 130-32.
69 *DM* 3.1.11 (vol. 25, 106): "… essetque nugatio dicere ens esse unum et bonum…."
70 Gracia, "Suárez and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals," 127.
71 Ibid.

being and the transcendental attributes are identical in reality (*extension*) and only (rationally) diverse according to what each formally signifies (i.e., they are distinct in intension). As I shall soon make clear in my response to Gracia's accusation of mentalism with respect to Suárez's transcendental theory, by denying that being has attributes that are *ex natura rei* distinct from being, the Jesuit does not mean to deny that being itself has real attributes. What he denies is that the *distinction* between being and its properties is real or *ex natura rei*.[72] If the transcendental attributes of being are identical with being, then there can be no doubt that they are in fact real, which entails that RP1 is secured.

What remains problematic is RP2, and someone such as Scotus, who, as we have noted, introduces a distinction *ex natura rei* between being and its attributes, could accuse Suárez of having failed to meet what is required for a scientific metaphysics. Suárez himself concedes that RP2 is not met because, strictly speaking, the transcendental attributes are not truly properties.[73] Again, as indicated above, the subject-property model that Aristotle utilized to develop his own substance metaphysics and which Scotus tried to accommodate in his own way is, from the Suárezian perspective, inadequate for transcendental purposes. As I suggested in the Introduction, in constructing a metaphysical science Suárez is not content to represent, much less repeat, Aristotle—for which reason Courtine ridicules the Jesuit's concern with the *res ipsae* as "pre-Cartesian"[74]—but desires to re-construct a metaphysical outlook that can accommodate the broader Christian theological tradition, which, as Aersten argues, has expressed itself metaphysically in terms of transcendentality.[75] Thus, with respect to Suárez himself, what is required for an Aristotelian science must be "modified" for the sake of "transcendental science."[76] Darge similarly explains, "The Aristotelian scientific model bases itself on the categorial order. It is therefore not suitable as a basis for the design of a transcendental science of being as such."[77] It is no surprise, then, that the Aristotelian metaphysics, which fundamentally trades upon the primacy of substance and its attendant properties, will require considerable revision.

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[72] Suárez argues similarly with respect to categorical relations and their real foundations wherein no *ex natura rei* distinction is involved. For more on this topic see Sydney Penner, "Suárez on the Reduction of Categorical Relations," *Philosophers' Imprint* 13 (2013): 1-24.

[73] *DM* 3.1.12.

[74] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 327.

[75] Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought: From Philip the Chancellor (ca. 1225) to Francisco Suárez* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), introduction.

[76] Ibid., 606.

[77] Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 105: "Das aristotelische Wissenschaftsmodell orientiert sich also an der kategorialen Ordnung. Es taugt deshalb nicht ohne weiteres als Grundlage für den Entwurf einer transzendentalen Wissenschaft vom Seienden als solchen."

2. Transcendentality and Mentalism?

2.1 The Accusation of Mentalism

While Suárez's revision of the scientific character of metaphysics seeks to accommodate a transcendental vision of being, the nature of what results from his efforts remains in question for some. As noted above, Gracia suggests that since, for Suárez, "the transcendental attributes of being are ways in which we conceive and think,"[78] the Jesuit ultimately transforms metaphysics into a subtle form of mentalism that paves the way for Kant's transcendental idealism. Yet, Suárez's appeal to negation and relations in his transcendental *explicatio entis* had antecedents within the pre-Scotistic transcendental tradition. For instance, in a discussion of the transcendental attributes in the *De potentia Dei*, Thomas Aquinas concedes that, though it is necessary that attributes "add" something to being, that *additum* can only be according to reason. More specifically, what is added is a negation (with respect to '*unum*') or a relation (with respect to '*verum*' and '*bonum*').[79] He also makes clear that those transcendentals remain intrinsic features of being itself.[80]

Though Suárez takes his inspiration from Thomas Aquinas, who also utilizes negation and relations in his own transcendental explanations,[81] Gracia complains that the Suárezian account "seems to be contradictory for it appears to imply that the properties of being are both real and not real."[82] They are real because they are co-extensional with being; they are not real because "These attributes do not have an entitative status in things outside the mind."[83] As Gracia correctly notes, for Suárez, negations and extrinsic denominations are not real beings but are, instead, beings of reason that only have *esse objectivum*.[84] While it is the case that beings of reason only have being in the intellect, it is not necessarily the case that they are complete fictions or inventions of the mind. For example, to say 'Homer is blind' does not thereby posit any real being within Homer but only denotes a privation. Nevertheless, if it is the case that Homer lacks vision, the proposition indicates something true about the world.[85] Finally, Homer's blindness is, as Suárez himself suggests, even conceived of as if it were a positive being.[86]

Given Suárez's reduction of the transcendental attributes of being to negation and relation, to some interpreters he seems to establish a new trajectory for meta-

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78 Gracia, "The Ontological Status of the Transcendental Attributes," 224.

79 Thomas, *De potentia Dei*, q. 9, a. 7, ad 6.

80 See Thomas, *In Sent.*, I, d. 8, q. 1, a. 3; *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 1; and especially *De veritate*, q. 21, a. 2.

81 *DM* 3.1.4.

82 Gracia, "Suárez and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals," 127.

83 Gracia, "The Transcendental Attributes of Being in Scholasticism and Modernity," 222-23.

84 *DM* 31.2.10; ibid., 54.2.9; ibid., 54.5.7.

85 Gracia, "Suárez and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals," 127-28. Here, 'conceptualism,' 'mentalism,' and 'representationalism' all amount to the same thing, namely, the reduction of being to the satisfaction of thought or fundamentally to thinkability.

86 *DM* 54.3.4.

physics that would attain its zenith with Kant's transcendental idealism.[87] Gracia is sure to point out, however, that there remain important distinctions between the Suárezian and Kantian viewpoints. Since '*verum*' and '*bonum*' imply an extramental reality of which they are real extrinsic denominations, they cannot be reduced to the Kantian notion of transcendentality. For Kant, transcendentality involves only the a priori structures of our cognition that determine what can be a possible object of experience. Nevertheless, insofar as the Suárezian transcendental attributes are nothing more than a function of thought, it is not clear how the Jesuit escapes the accusation of 'conceptualism,' which is just a matter of "the ways we think about things."[88] In the preceding chapter we saw that Gracia also describes this epistemological approach as 'mentalism.' Others describe it as 'representationalism.'[89] Whatever its denomination, the philosophical attitude at work here is such that existence is displaced by what can be conceived or thought.

The difficulty with Suárez's transcendental account, as Gracia reads him, is that the Jesuit seems to reduce the transcendental attributes to mere beings of reason. Now, Gracia himself is fully aware that Suárez rejects this reduction, for it is precisely such a reduction that T2 warns against.[90] Gracia therefore acknowledges that the transcendental attributes are not merely fictitious. Nevertheless, in devoting himself to an exposition of Suárez's transcendental thought in terms of negations, privations, relations, and extrinsic denominations, the characterization of the transcendental attributes as if they were *entia rationis* is unavoidable. It is hardly surprising, then, that Gracia finds the Suárezian doctrine so problematic. If the transcendental attributes are not beings of reason and yet are nothing real, then, as Gracia rightly asks: "what are they, and how are they to be distinguished from being *qua* being?"[91]

Uscatescu Barrón seems to be more forthright and explains that the transcendental attributes of being (*las notas del ser*) are "formally beings of reason."[92] For this reason, Darge complains that Uscatescu reduces Suárez's transcendental doctrine to an account of *entia rationis*.[93] I think Darge's read of Uscatescu is, to a certain extent, reductive since the latter immediately notes that "through them [i.e., beings of reason] the real nature of being is revealed."[94] In other words, Uscatescu

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87 Of course, whether it is fair to saddle Suárez with the charge of dubious innovation is an altogether different matter. Thomas, as just noted, had also approached transcendental differentiation on the basis of negations and relations. We must recall also that Suárez thinks Thomas's approach is fundamentally true. It simply requires "explanation," which the Jesuit aims to supply. See *DM* 3.1.4.

88 Gracia, "The Transcendental Attributes of Being in Scholasticism and Modernity," 215.

89 See Pereira, *Suárez: Between Scholasticism and Modernity* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2007), 128.

90 Gracia, "Suárez and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals," 126, 130.

91 Ibid., 126.

92 Uscatescu, "Acerca de la unidad," 200: "… las notas del ser sean formalmente entes de razón…."

93 Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 117.

94 Uscatescu, "Acerca de la unidad," 200: "… mediante ellas se revela la índole del ser real."

calls attention to the "paradox" that what are "formally authentic beings of reason," namely, negations and relations, can serve to explain the intrinsic constitution of being itself together with its inner perfections.[95] If the transcendental attributes are not simply synonymous with being, then they must formally signify, as Suárez holds with T3, something (rationally) distinct.[96] Giving particular attention to unity, Uscatescu notes that what is formally signified is a negation.[97] What is more, negations pertain to beings of reason.[98] It is through a negation that a certain transcendental attribute ('*unum*') is explained as that which "follows upon the nature of being."[99] While *ens* also signifies its own structure, it does so without the mediation of negations or extrinsic denominations for what being signifies is its existential reference.[100]

Nevertheless, it strikes me that the identification of the transcendental attributes formally as *entia rationis* lacks fidelity to Suárez's own transcendental outlook. Though these attributes formally add negations and extrinsic denominations since they are not synonymous with being, what is *explained* by these attributes is not our conceptions but "a real positive perfection of being."[101] This is coordinate with T2 which, we recall, holds that, though the distinction between being and its transcendental attributes derives from reason, those attributes are not themselves beings of reason. Contrary to what Gracia and Uscatescu assert, Suárez maintains that "as a [transcendental] attribute is only distinguished by reason from a real subject, it is necessary that it is a real attribute and not only of reason or a privation."[102] Were it the case that the transcendental attributes were beings of reason, then the distinction between the attributes and being would be greater than what obtains through a rational distinction. In such a case, the distinction would not be among different aspects of a being within itself but between non-being and being.[103] For this reason, the transcendental attributes are not "able to signify beings of reason in the strict sense."[104] To speak of *unum*, *bonum*, and *verum* is not to speak of beings of reason, concepts, or thoughts, but is instead more fundamentally to speak of the positive,

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95 Ibid.: "Por consiguiente, y por paradójico que parezca, tales notas, aun siendo formalmente auténticos entes de razón, explicitan la constitución del ser mismo, sus perfecciones."

96 *DM* 3.1.11.

97 Uscatescu, "Acerca de la unidad," 206.

98 Ibid., 204.

99 Ibid., 206: "La unidad significa formalmente una negación, pero mienta una perfección en el ser real en general: por medio de la negación se explicita una nota transcendental que se sigue de la naturaleza del ser."

100 Ibid.

101 *DM* 3.1.11 (vol. 25, 106): "… per ea tamen explicatur realis positiva perfectio entis." Cf. Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 608.

102 Ibid., 3.1.6 (vol. 25, 104): "… ut attributum sit sola ratione distinctum a reali subjecto, oportet quod sit attributum reale, et non rationis tantum, vel privatum…."

103 Ibid.

104 Ibid., 3.1.11 (vol. 25, 106): "… neque etiam significare possunt entia rationis in rigore sumpta…."

intrinsic structure of being itself, for "in reality the entity of a thing is its goodness, and truth, and conversely."[105]

Be that as it may, one might raise the following objection: in a previous passage (*DM* 3.1.6) Suárez holds that it is one thing to consider what an attribute signifies and another thing to consider what we intend to explain by that attribute. As is the case with *unum*, what is *signified* is a negation "through which, however, a positive and real perfection of a thing is explained by us."[106] Yet, negations, as Gracia correctly points out, are beings of reason.[107] Is not Uscatescu also correct, then, when he says that the transcendental attributes are formally beings of reason? Further still, if the transcendental attributes of being are *entia rationis*, which only have being in the intellect (*esse objectivum*), has not Suárez transformed metaphysics into a science of the thinkable?

The problem seems to be that Suárez is inconsistent with what he thinks the transcendental attributes actually signify. Though he indicates that they signify or pertain to the positive and intrinsic structures of being, he appears to undermine that claim when he says that being's attributes formally signify negations and extrinsic denominations. Negations and extrinsic denominations have no positive, intrinsic being for which reason they are identified as *entia rationis*.[108] The question then is: what does Suárez understand by 'signification' in the present context? Though he does not develop a semantic theory *ex professo* in the way that a number of fourteenth-century authors, such as William of Ockham, John Buridan, and Albert of Saxony, did, Suárez nevertheless operates with some sense of the significative value that transcendental terms possess. In fact, when discussing transcendental truth, Suárez explains that part of the reason for the difficulties that have gripped competing philosophical theses is a failure properly to recognize the original reason for the imposition of certain terms and how those terms have subsequently been transposed (*translata*) for the signification of something else.[109]

As a number of scholars have indicated, an important feature of Suárez's transcendental theory is the notion of connotative signification.[110] Jesuit scholastics philosophizing in the wake of Suárez also developed their transcendental accounts in terms of connotation. Pedro Hurtado de Mendoza, for instance, holds that, while the first concept one attains of a thing is its essence, in virtue of which it is grasped

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105 Ibid., 3.1.13 (vol. 25, 107): "… nam quoad rem intrinsecam, quam in ente significant, non distinguuntur in re, cum nihil dicant ex natura rei distinctum ab ente, ut ostensum est; et hoc modo dici solet, quod in re entitas rei est bonitas ejus et veritas, et e converso."

106 Ibid., 3.1.6 (vol. 104): "… saepe enim id quod formaliter significatur, est negativum, per illud autem a nobis explicitur positiva et realis perfectio rei…."

107 Gracia, "Suárez and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals," 127.

108 Cf. *DM* 54.2.9; ibid., 54.5.7.

109 *DM* 8.7.24.

110 Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 611, 617-18; Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 335, 371, 380; Hans Seigfried, *Wahrheit und Metaphysik Bei Suarez* (Bonn: H. Bouvier u. Co. Verlag, 1967), 129-31.

as a being, other connotative concepts arise therefrom, secondarily. "For '*since something is being* [*ens*], *it is good*;' it is not, however, '*being* [*ens*], *because it is good*,' since goodness is not the origin of being; but being of goodness.... being [*ens*] is the primary concept; goodness however the secondary."[111] In a similar vein, Rodrigo de Arriaga explains that, though the attributes of being are formally the same as being itself, each attribute "is conceived in relation to diverse connotations, by a secondary concept deduced from the first."[112]

A connotative term, then, is one that signifies its object directly and, simultaneously, something else indirectly. The terms signifying transcendental attributes are such connotative terms, for, in signifying being, they also connote aspects of being such as indivision, congruence, et cetera.[113] When Suárez determines what each attribute connotes, he frames his discussion in terms of the diverse and intense inter-scholastic debates relative to those attributes. For our purposes, it will be sufficient to note (1) that each term signifying a transcendental attribute pertains to the intrinsic and positive structures of real being, (2) that what each transcendental term formally signifies is being itself, and (3) that what is connoted by transcendental attributes are negations and/or extrinsic denominations.

2.2 The Intrinsic Entitative Character of the Transcendentals

2.2.1 Transcendental Unity

In the fourth disputation Suárez begins his treatment of particular transcendentals with an exploration of the nature of *unum*. Once again, he rejects the Scotistic perspective that unity is added to being as a "certain positive accident that is distinct *ex natura rei* from being."[114] Not surprisingly, T1, which, we recall, maintains that nothing can be added to being that is not already being, is cited as the reason for the dismissal of Scotus's thesis.[115] Unity is not a positive addition to being but, instead, adds a negation, more specifically a privation.[116] That is to say, unity involves the lack or deprivation of division (=D). Importantly, Suárez notes that division itself is not always something negative. This is noteworthy, since if division—the basis of transcendental unity—pertains to a positive structure within being, then it is not the case that transcendental unity can itself be reduced to a being of reason, as the inter-

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[111] Hurtado, *Universa philosophia* (Lyon, 1624: 743), Metaph., disp. 3, s. 1, n. 10: "Nam *quia est ens, est bonum*; non autem *est ens, quia est bonum*, quia bonitas non est origo entitatis: sed entitas bonitatis.... ens est primarius conceptus: bonitas autem secundarius..." (italics in original).

[112] Arriaga, *Cursus philosophicus* (Lyon, 1669: 943), Metaph., disp. 1, s. 2, n. 23: "... concipitur tamen in ordine ad diversa connotata, conceptu secondario deducto ex primario."

[113] Ibid.

[114] *DM* 4.1.1 (vol. 25, 115): "... *unum* addere supra ens accidens quoddam positivum, ex natura rei distinctum ab ente...."

[115] Ibid., 4.1.1.

[116] Ibid., 4.1.12 (vol. 25, 118): "... unum addere supra ens negationem aliquam per modum privationis."

pretations of Gracia and Uscatescu maintain. Operative behind Suárez's approach seems to be the notion that any negation or privation must always be preceded by something positive. For example, to identify blindness as a privation presupposes not only some subject (e.g., Homer) but also some positive property (e.g., vision) that the subject should have. While Suárez does in fact identify a negative sense of division (Dn) (e.g., 'Homer is *not* Aeschylus') this presupposes a positive sense of division (Dp) wherein it is understood that Homer and Aeschylus are themselves both "complete and fixed" (*completa et terminata*) beings. To identify Homer as a being and Aeschylus as a being does not involve any negation but only the recognition of the entitative perfection that pertains to each individual. For this reason, Dp pertains to nothing other than the being itself of each thing, which can subsequently serve as the basis for Dn. Suárez concludes, "Therefore indivision, which *unum* signifies, denies division by a positive character [Dp], which is discovered in divided things, and not by a negative character [Dn], which includes the division of one from another."[117]

If it is the case that the intrinsic positive structures of being serve as the basis of transcendental unity, then the question arises "whether unity formally signifies [*dicat*] only a negation that is added to being or something else."[118] This question recalls the difficulty the objection referenced above raised: Suárez seems to be double-minded when he says that the transcendental attributes signify real being, but in another place he says that they signify negations or extrinsic denominations. The difficulty emerges because the objection frames the matter disjunctively: either unity signifies a negation or it signifies being. Yet, from the manner in which Suárez poses the question, we see that a negative answer would not exclude signifying a negation; he denies that unity *only* signifies negation. In other words, Suárez is broaching the notion of the transcendental attributes' connotative character. In determining just what unity formally signifies Suárez identifies two basic philosophical attitudes: first, there are those who claim that 'unity' formally signifies only a negative predicate; second, there are those who hold that 'unity' is conceived not as some privation joined (*adjunctam*) to being, but "as the nature or entity of a thing itself."[119] For his part, Suárez defends the second position and adduces a number of arguments in its favor.[120] We need only consider a few in order to appreciate the nature of Suárez's approach to this question.

'Unity' formally signifies *real* unity, Suárez says. By 'real unity,' I take Suárez to be specifying the scope of transcendental unity. Insofar as transcendental unity is an attribute of real being, it would not pertain to that which falls outside of

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[117] Ibid., 4.1.21 (vol. 25, 121): "Indivisio ergo, quam dicit unum, negat divisionem ratione positivi, quod in rebus divisis invenitur, non ratione negationis, quam includit divisio unius ab alio."

[118] Ibid. 4.2 (vol. 25, 122): "Utrum unum de formali dicat solam negationem, quam addit supra ens, vel aliquid aliud."

[119] Ibid., 4.2.6 (vol. 25, 124): "Alii vero concipiunt unitatem non esse veluti quamdam privationem adjunctam enti, sed esse ipsam rei naturam seu entitatem, quae entitas vel essentia constituit ens."

[120] Cf. Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 615.

ens reale. For example, Achilles is one fictitious character as is Patroclus, but the unity that each possesses is not real since these characters are only *entia rationis*.[121] Furthermore, Suárez argues that real unity is not only a negation. This can be seen from the fact that God is called one because of the positive character of the divine essence itself which is undividable. Similarly, a human being is numerically one because that person has one numerical nature. Neither the divine essence nor the numerical nature of an individual person is a negation. In other words, given that Dp, as we saw above, functions as the basis for the privation that unity adds, real unity signifies more than just a negation, which is to say, it signifies being itself.

As a further argument, Suárez remarks that transcendental unity does not formally signify the addition of something quasi-adjoined (*quasi adjacens*) or adventitious to being in the way that 'white' formally signifies a white thing (*albedinem*). The way that something is one is different from the way in which something is white. Whereas something is 'one' innermostly (*intime*) and through its own positive reality or being, something is white through the addition of a supervening form (i.e., the accidental form 'white') that is other than its subject. Accordingly, 'unity' does not formally signify only negation but primarily "intrinsic undivided being itself" (*ipsam intrinsecam entitatem indivisam*). The same is true with the other transcendentals (good and true) which not only signify relations of reason but also, and more importantly, being itself.[122]

In his discussion of transcendental unity, it is not the case that Suárez reduces unity to a merely mental construct, as Gracia holds, nor does the Jesuit think that unity is formally a being of reason, as Uscatescu has argued. The metaphysical basis for unity, as we have seen, is just the positive structure of being itself. Indeed, it is not the case that what transcendental unity primarily signifies is a being of reason, for unity signifies something's intrinsic entitative structure. Nevertheless, though unity primarily and positively signifies being itself, it also connotes negation. This latter claim remains implicit in the text since Suárez never denies that unity signifies negation. Rather, he denies that unity *only* signifies negation. In his discussion of transcendental truth and goodness, Suárez makes explicit the connotative character of the transcendental attributes and further defends the claim that they are predicated upon the real and positive structure of being itself and not just "our ways of thinking."

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[121] One might say that 'unity,' like 'being,' is attributed to real being and beings of reason according to an analogy of attribution, which, while not purely equivocal, excludes *entia rationis* from the objective concept of being. Cf. *DM* 54.1.9. Later Jesuit scholastics, such as Hurtado de Mendoza, thought that the transcendentals could be applied to *entia rationis*. See Hurtado, *Universa philosophia*, Metaphysica, d. 1, s. 2, ss. 2, n. 57 (Lyon, 1624). Other scholastics still, such as Sylvester Mauro, went so far as to describe not only supertranscendental being, but also supertranscendental unity, supertranscendental goodness, etc. Sylvester Mauro, *Opus theologicum in tres tomos distributum* (Rome, 1687: 187), Tomus I, lib. 2, q. 58, n. 41: "Sicut praeter ens transcendentale, datur ens supertranscendentale abstrahens ab ente positive, & negativo, & pure denominativo, sic datur etiam verum supertranscendentale, & bonum supertranscendentale." Cf. also Doyle, *On the Borders of Being and Knowing*, 208-209.

[122] *DM* 4.2.7.

2.2.2 *Transcendental Truth*

Like his discussion of transcendental unity, Suárez's exposition of transcendental truth engages the entire scholastic tradition's diverse range of opinions in minute detail. For our purposes, it is sufficient to consider the way he addresses the question whether truth is something (*aliqua*) in things (*in rebus*). Does truth correspond to some intrinsic structure of being or is it merely an extrinsic denomination on the part of the cognitive agent? We already know that Gracia views Suárez's position as maintaining that truth, together with goodness, possesses no intrinsic extramental status. Yet, Suárez complains that if it is the case that truth and falsity are distinguished from goodness and evil insofar as the latter are truly in things, whereas the former are only in the mind (*in mente tantum*), then truth would only be an extrinsic denomination. Yet, since an extrinsic denomination is not sufficient to constitute a property of being, truth would not be a transcendental attribute.[123] Suárez seems to be aware precisely of the kind of critique regarding the non-extramental status of being that would result from the notion of truth as constituted entirely by an extrinsic denomination.

Suárez sketches the parameters of the problem. Just as was the case with respect to unity, which fundamentally signifies not so much negation but the entity underlying that negation, so likewise truth does not only express an extrinsic denomination or something fabricated by the intellect but being itself signified according to some other character (*ratio*).[124] The question for Suárez is: what is that *ratio* specific to truth? He is aware that the traditional definition of truth holds that truth consists in the adequation of the intellect to a thing.[125] Since adequation or, what is the same, conformity is involved in truth, does this mean that what truth signifies is a relation? This is no pedestrian question since the answers it receives will be as varied and diverse as the nature of the relation (i.e., a real relation or relation of reason) at stake as well as the nature of the terms involved (i.e., in relation to the divine intellect or in relation to any intellect whatsoever).[126] In general, however, Suárez seems reluctant to establish the nature of truth on a merely relational model.

The reason for this reluctance stems from the fact that a relational model would seem to undermine the intrinsic reality of the being that truth signifies. Consider a relation of reason between some intellect (*i*) and some thing (*r*) to which *i* is said to be conformed. The relation of conformity *i-r* only exists so long as *r* is "considered or thought by" (*dum consideratur aut fingatur*) *i*.[127] This would mean that *r* is not true until and only so long as it is the term of *i*'s consideration. Such a claim would undermine the notion that truth is a transcendental attribute of being. Suárez also

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123 Ibid., 8.7.1.
124 Ibid., 8.7.6.
125 Ibid., 8.7.8.
126 Ibid., 8.7.9.
127 Ibid., 8.7.11.

notes that God is said to be transcendentally true from eternity, but there are no relations of reason required within God nor would there be any other intellect, *ab aeterno*, to form a relation of reason with God as its terminus.[128] One may respond that in the case of the creator-creature relationship there is always a real relation in which the creature is judged according to its conformity to the divine exemplar. The truth of a created entity would consist in this relation of adequation. Suárez points out, however, that such an understanding of truth would not truly be transcendental, which is to say an attribute of being as such, since it would not pertain to the divine being—God has no internal real relations.[129] Moreover, with respect to the creator-creature relationship, Suárez argues that it is one thing for a relation to follow from some (metaphysically prior) reality but another thing for that reality to be constituted by a relation.[130] It is because a creature has first been created, which is to say, established in being, that it can enter into a relationship of conformity to the divine mind. "Prescinding, therefore, from such a relation [of the creature to the divine mind, the creature] is able to be understood beforehand to be true being and such a being."[131]

In contrast to the relational model of truth in its varied forms, Suárez argues for the entitative basis of truth (*verum*=V) in four theses (V1-V4). First (V1), he holds that transcendental truth intrinsically signifies the "real entity of a thing itself, which is denominated true."[132] Consistent with T1 and T3, truth adds nothing to being that is distinct from being either absolutely or relatively and certainly not *ex natura rei*. Yet, if truth signifies the intrinsic structure of being, how is it not simply the essence of being itself? That is to say, how is truth not just synonymous with being? Suárez cannot admit that the transcendental attributes are synonymous with being for they must somehow be distinct, albeit not *ex natura rei*.[133] If the putative transcendental attribute were just synonymous, then being would not be an apt subject for a science.

Suárez overcomes this challenge with V2: "transcendental truth signifies the entity of a thing by connoting a cognition or a conception of the intellect, to which such a being is conformed, either in which such a thing is represented or is able to

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128 Ibid.

129 Ibid., 8.7.12. Suárez notes that while the persons of the Holy Trinity are distinguished in terms of relations, those relations are not such that they consist in a conformity to the intellect, which is what is required for truth. Thus, while it is true that the Father is known by the Word and vice versa, the relationship between the Father and the Word is in terms of origin and that which is begotten.

130 Ibid., 8.7.15.

131 Ibid. (vol. 25, 300): "… ergo, praecisa tali relatione, praeintelligi potest esse verum ens et tale ens…."

132 Ibid., 8.7.24 (vol. 25, 303): "… dico primo, vertitatem transcendentalem intrinsece dicere entitatem realem ipsius rei, quae vera denominatur…."

133 Ibid., 3.2.7.

be represented just as it is."[134] Here, connotation serves to make clear that what the transcendental attributes (in the present case truth) primarily signify is the intrinsic character of being itself. Simultaneously, connotation introduces a rational distinction (as opposed to a distinction *ex natura rei*) between the attributes and being. While being (*ens*) signifies an order to existence and connotes nothing further, transcendental truth, though it signifies the entity of a thing, further connotatively signifies an extrinsic relationship between being and some intellect. To use Suárez's examples, in the case of the mystery of the Eucharist to call the consecrated host the 'true body of Christ' is to signify nothing other than that body itself "through which a proper and true concept the body of Christ is represented."[135] Similarly, with respect to the Incarnation, when one calls God 'true man,' what is meant is that God truly has that nature which we *understand* to constitute the essential nature of a human being. What these examples reveal is that truth signifies the thing itself that is designated as true in relation to, or in comparison with, its own proper conception. As such, it is not the case that truth is simply a "proper or actual relation, but that mutual relation or connection between the thing and its conception, and the connotation of one as corresponding to another."[136] While the correspondence between a thing and its conception can ordinarily be understood simply in terms of a 'relation,' Suárez nuances the nature of that relationship or "conformity between the intellect and thing."[137] This conformity should not be understood as if it were a mere relation but, instead, as a function of a denomination taken from the consortium of several things wherein one is represented by another.[138]

V3 expands on the nature of the conformity that truth connotes. "[T]his transcendental truth can be explained both in an aptitudinal way and in a way of actual conformity, and both in an order to the divine intellect as well as to a created intellect, and in terms of the character [*ratio*] of what is known and of the knower if we are speaking completely of true being, or in the nature of the caused and of the cause or the measured and the measure, if discussing created being or artifacts."[139] The reason why truth connotes an 'aptitudinal conformity' is because "every real

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[134] Ibid., 8.7.25 (vol. 25, 303): "… vertiatem transcendentalem significare entitatem rei connotando cognitionem seu conceptum intellectus, cui talis entitas conformatur, vel in quo talis res repraesentatur, vel repraesentari potest prout est."

[135] Ibid. (vol. 25, 303): "… per *verum corpus*, nihil aliud significamus quam illud idem corpus, quod per proprium ac verum conceptum corporis Christi repraesentatur."

[136] Ibid. (vol. 25, 304): "… non est intelligendum de relatione propria et actuali, sed de illa mutua connexione rei et conceptus, et connotatione unius, ut correspondentis alteri…."

[137] Ibid. (vol. 25, 304): "… *conformitas inter intellectum et rem*…." Cf. Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 618.

[138] Ibid.

[139] Ibid., 8.7.26 (vol. 25, 304): "… hanc veritatem transcendentalem posse, et per modum aptitudinalis, et per modum actualis conformitatis explicari, et in ordine ad intellectum divinum, et ad creatum, et in ratione cogniti et cognoscentis, si universaliter de ente vero loquamur, vel in ratione causati et causae, vel mensurati et mensurae, si de ente creato seu artificiali sermo sit."

being" is naturally able to produce a "true estimation" (*veram aestimationem*) of itself insofar as each being is intelligible and thus able to be a principle or a terminus of cognition.[140] The character of truth that emerges from this particular conception is such that every real being, if not actually, at least aptitudinally, is capable of producing a conception of itself in any intellect, whether divine or creaturely.[141] This means that God, as a real being, can produce such an estimation. As Suárez makes clear, "God is not true God because He knows Himself as such, but rather because He is true God, therefore He is truly able to know Himself as such."[142]

Finally, with V4 Suárez explains that "transcendental truth is *not merely an extrinsic denomination*, although it includes or connotes [*connotet*] the conjunction of another thing, whereby the former [i.e., denomination] results."[143] As an example, we may consider the relationship between seeing and a visible object as well as hearing and an audible object. It must be supposed that in the sensible objects (i.e., the visible and the audible) there is some intrinsic nature (*ratio*) that is apt to terminate or bring to completion some corresponding power (i.e., seeing or hearing). An apple, for example, on account of its color can be seen, and a chime can be heard on account of the sound it produces. Both color and sound are not mere extrinsic denominations but represent intrinsic qualities (at least on Suárez's non-Lockean view) within the apple and chime. Nevertheless, those qualities are apt to give rise to visibility and to audibility which are themselves extrinsically denominated in relation to a viewer or hearer. The same can be said with respect to that which is called true. Not only is some extrinsic faculty capable of knowing being connoted, but more importantly the intrinsic structure of a being as intelligible must be presupposed.[144]

2.2.3 Transcendental Goodness

Thus far, we have seen that transcendental unity and truth both primarily signify the intrinsic structure of being itself and only connote either a negation (unity) or conformity (truth). For this reason, Suárez dismisses the claims that unity is *only* a negation and that truth is *merely* an extrinsic denomination. It is difficult, then, to reconcile his transcendental doctrine with the interpretations of Gracia or Uscatescu. Uscatescu claims that the transcendental attributes formally signify *entia rationis*. Suárez, as we have seen, rejects precisely such a notion. Likewise to claim that the transcendental attributes have no extramental status, as Gracia does, ignores the countless texts wherein Suárez states the exact opposite. Here

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[140] Ibid., 8.7.27.

[141] Ibid., 8.7.29.

[142] Ibid., 8.7.30 (vol. 25, 305): "… non enim Deus ideo verus Deus est, quia talem se esse cognoscit, sed potius quia est verus Deus, ideo vere se talem esse cognoscit."

[143] Ibid., 8.7.34 (vol. 25, 306): "… hanc veritatem transcendentalem *non esse meram denominationem extrinsecam*, quamvis includat aliquo modo seu connotet conjunctionem alterius rei, unde illa resultat" (my emphases).

[144] Ibid.

we can consider the problematic example Gracia himself brings to bear against the Suárezian conception of goodness. One can call a piece of candy 'good,' Gracia explains, but that denomination is merely extrinsic for it says nothing about the nature of candy itself. Calling the candy 'good' represents a relationship between a person and the candy and reveals something about how a particular person perceives the candy. "Ontologically, good is something in the person's mind and not in the candy."[145] While one person might think the candy is 'good' because of its degree of sweetness, another person might think that the same piece of candy is too sweet and thus nauseating rather than good. On Gracia's read, Suárez's view of the nature of goodness commits one to the claim that "there is nothing in the thing about which we are speaking or thinking that we can distinguish from it and call good."[146] This claim, as we shall soon see, is questionable in light of Suárez's conclusions regarding the nature of the good.

Suárez begins his exposition of the good by appealing, once again, to connotation. The good is simply being (*ens*) which "by nature or character [*rationem*] precedes the good."[147] The question for Suárez is: what is that form or character (*ratio*) by which some thing is called 'good'? Put differently, if, as we shall soon see, the good properly and primarily signifies the being of something, contrary to what Gracia suggests, then what is it that the good *connotes*?

As is his custom, Suárez spends considerable time sorting through and rejecting a variety of competing answers to the question he just raised. While some (e.g., Capreolus and Durandus) suggest that the good connotes a relation (whether that be a rational or real relation),[148] others, such as Duns Scotus, think that the good is an absolute, real property added to being that remains distinct *ex natura rei*.[149] Suárez objects to both the relational and absolute accounts. The good cannot be reduced to a relation since a relation does not intrinsically include being, and "what does not include being is nothing."[150] Suárez appeals to Thomas's claim that goodness principally consists in perfection, but nothing can be understood to be perfect or even intelligible without being.[151] Nor can it be the case that the good is a real relation since God is said to be good through His own being from eternity without relation to anything else.[152] That Suárez would reject the Scotistic claim that good adds something positive and distinct to being comes as no surprise given his abiding commitment to T1.

As was the case with transcendental truth, Suárez thinks that goodness does not express a relation but rather the intrinsic entity of a thing: "goodness signifies

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145 Gracia, "The Transcendental Attributes of Being in Scholasticism and Modernity," 223.
146 Ibid., 224.
147 *DM* 10.1.1 (vol. 25, 328): "… esse ens quod natura seu ratione bonum antecedit…."
148 Ibid., 10.1.2-5.
149 Ibid., 10.1.6.
150 Ibid., 10.1.3 (vol. 25, 329): "… quod entitatem non includat, nihil est…."
151 Ibid. For Thomas see *Summa theologiae* I, q. 48, a. 5.
152 Ibid., 10.1.5.

nothing other than the intrinsic perfection of a thing, which in absolute things is absolute and relative in relative things."[153] That which is a being *simpliciter* enjoys, on account of that being, its own perfection and thereby its own goodness *simpliciter*. Those beings, however, that exist *secundum quid* (e.g., accidents or parts) are said to be good through the perfections that they bring to bear upon their subject. Suárez is clear: "Since the good and the perfect are the same… therefore goodness and perfection are the same… since each and everything is good insofar as it is perfect."[154] But if goodness and perfection are identical, would that not make being simply the essence of goodness? If being is the essence of goodness, then goodness would not so much be a transcendental attribute of being as a synonym. This objection is similar to those leveled against Suárez's accounts of transcendental unity and truth; his solution to the present objection is the same as the one he offered then, namely, connotation.

> The good is only able to add above being [*ens*] the character [*rationem*] of agreement [*convenientiae*], which is not properly a relation, but only connotes in another such a nature having a natural inclination, capacity, or conjunction with such a perfection; whence goodness signifies the perfection of a thing itself, by connoting the aforesaid agreement [*convenientiam*].[155]

This accounting of the good retains the understanding that perfection—and thus entity—is contained in the very concept of goodness. Nevertheless, because goodness connotes 'agreeableness' (*convenientia*) that connotation is sufficient to introduce a distinction—on the basis of reason—between being and goodness such that they are not synonymous. Whereas 'being' signifies existence, 'good' connotes *convenientia* on account of which it can be numbered among the transcendental attributes of being.[156]

One may ask: just what is this agreeableness or *convenientia* that the good connotes? Suárez indicates that what is at issue is the 'connaturalness' that something else has to the object denominated 'good.' That is, if the transcendentals are as extensionally universal as being, then every particular being should be good. But how can venom be considered good to a human being, who is struck by the bite of a viper?[157] Suárez's answer is simply that it is not. Venom is not 'good' for the snake-bitten victim and connotes evil, which signifies the lack of inclination to or capacity for the chemical properties of the venom. The case is different for the viper,

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[153] Ibid., 10.1.9 (vol. 25, 331): "… bonitatem nihil aliud dicere quam intrinsecam rei perfectionem, quae absoluta est in absolutis, et relativa in relativis."

[154] Ibid., 10.1.10 (vol. 25, 331): "… quia bonum et perfectum idem sunt… ergo et bonitas et perfectio sunt idem… quia unumquodque in tantum bonum est, in quantum est perfectum."

[155] Ibid., 10.1.12 (vol. 25, 332): "… bonum supra ens solum posse addere rationem convenientiae, quae non est proprie relatio, sed solum connotat in alio talem naturam habentem naturalem inclinationem, capacitatem, vel conjunctionem cum tali perfectione; unde bonitas dicit ipsam perfectionem rei, connotando praedictam convenientiam…."

[156] Ibid., 10.1.18.

[157] See Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 623.

however, for which there is a natural inclination to the chemical properties of the venom, at least as they serve the snake's defense.

Importantly, like transcendental truth, we see that, with respect to goodness, what is connoted—agreeableness—"is not a relation, but the thing itself, as accommodated to such a nature, which is not able to be called anything other than a mutual connection among things and a fundamental proportion."[158] Just as a being's intrinsic perfection makes it intelligible and thus can serve as the basis of conformity to an intellect, so likewise does a being's intrinsic perfection serve as the possibility for something's natural inclinations being accommodated. With these considerations in place, we can see why Gracia's example of the candy vis-à-vis the good misses the point. First, the candy, properly speaking, is not *ens reale* but *ens per accidens*, which means that, as an artifact, any value assigned to it will always be conventional and thus extrinsic. Second, if one were to consider the candy in terms of its natural chemical composition (sucrose), one can determine why it is called 'good.' Sucrose has a certain intrinsic chemical nature that identifies it as sucrose rather than a different molecular structure such as, for example, protein. Third, when the intrinsic chemical structure that makes up sucrose meets with something that has a connatural inclination to it, that sucrose is connoted as 'good.' Thus, honey bees, ants, and children, each of whom has a connatural inclination to the sucrose because it serves their dietary needs or desires, are drawn to the candy as good. Lions, tigers, and bears, however, because their dietary requirements are different may regard the candy indifferently but a protein-rich beef steak as good. But even then, that is because the intrinsic (chemical) nature of the steak connotes goodness to the carnivorous animals that have a connatural inclination.

3. Transcendentality and the Evisceration of Existence?

Despite Gracia's claims to the contrary, we have seen how Suárez's transcendental analysis of the structure of being remains affixed to its intrinsic entitative perfections. What is more, if Suárez's transcendental analysis corresponds to the intrinsic character of being and if being itself is understood in terms of its existential reference, then his transcendental theory amounts to an account of the intelligible structures of existence itself. While the transcendental attributes connote negations and extrinsic denominations, it is not the case that they are mere thought-objects or beings of reason. This is just to take T2 seriously. Though the attributes come about through a distinction in reason, what results (i.e., the transcendental attributes) is not itself a being of reason. Again, what is *explained* by these negations and extrinsic denominations is just the intrinsic perfection of being.

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[158] *DM* 10.1.12 (vol. 25, 332): "… non sit relatio, sed ipsa res, ut accommodata tali naturae, quod nihil aliud dicere potest quam mutuam rerum connexionem, et fundamentalem proportionem."

Nevertheless, Suárez's insistence upon the entitative character of the transcendental attributes provides little reassurance for interpreters such as Courtine and Víctor Sanz. They view the Suárezian doctrine of being as the liquidation of the *actus essendi* such that what is left behind is the empty shell of a thought-object. Within a specifically transcendental context, Sanz carries forward Courtine's approach and finds Suárez's reduction of the traditional attributes *res* and *aliquid* to *ens* to support Courtine's claim that a "non-thematized" doctrine of "nothing" operates at the core of the Suárezian metaphysics. Within that metaphysical perspective being is reduced to "that which is opposed to nothing."[159] This double negation—not nothing (*non nihil*)—is understood as only a relation of reason or extrinsic denomination, which is to say, the object of metaphysics is constituted not by the structure of what actually exists but, instead, by mere thought.[160] Once again, the specter of mentalism threateningly rears its head against Suárez's purported realist metaphysics. This mentalist tendency comes about because in Suárez's (reductive) transcendental analysis: "The term being is that which ends up being circumscribed… by the meanings of thing and something, losing the generic indetermination which it has in its strict signification as being."[161]

In the immediately preceding Chapter I already had occasion to remark upon Courtine's problematic interpretation of the Suárezian doctrine of being with respect to *res*. For reasons I shall soon adduce, I believe Sanz falls prey to that same misunderstanding but compounds it further by extending his interpretation to the notion of *aliquid*. To appreciate what is at stake with *res* and *aliquid* within the Suárezian metaphysics we must turn to the transcendental context in which he further develops the meaning behind *res* as well as how he determines what is at issue with *aliquid*. Since I have already addressed Suárez's view on transcendentality in general and have considered *unum*, *verum*, and *bonum* in particular, the task now is to examine Suárez's reasoning for the number of transcendentals and what his metaphysical principle is for determining that number in the first place.

3.1 Transcendental Enumeration

As to the principle employed to determine what counts as a transcendental, we have already alluded to it in passing; Suárez himself makes clear that "the attributes of being [*passiones entis*] should add something over being." But since, as TI holds, being cannot have any real properties that are distinct *ex natura rei*, he hastens to add that the transcendental attributes "are not able to add something positive

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159 Sanz, "La reducción suareciana de los trascendentales," 403. Cf. Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 247: "… la thèse (non thématique) du *nihil*."

160 Ibid., 413.

161 Ibid., 414: "… el término ente es el que acaba por circunscribirse… a las acepciones de cosa y algo, perdiendo la indeterminación genérica que tiene en su estricto significado de ente."

and real."[162] As we saw above, what these attributes add are negations and extrinsic denominations that are rationally distinct from being. In other words, the transcendentals have the same extension as being but they are different in intension. The challenge Suárez faces in his transcendental enumeration is how to determine the parameters for the intension of being; for, if two putative transcendental terms have the same intension as being, though varied etymologically in terms of their imposition, they are not really transcendental attributes but simply synonymous with being. As Suárez explains in the dubative part of *DM* 3.2, within the transcendental tradition there have been two main approaches to determining the transcendental intension of being.

The first trend is represented chiefly by Thomas Aquinas, who, in his *De vertitate*, q. 1, a. 1 identifies the traditional six convertible transcendentals: *ens*, *res*, *aliquid*, *unum*, *verum*, and *bonum*.[163] Without elaborating further on this viewpoint, Suárez points out that there are those (including himself) who view this list as too expansive on account of its inclusion of *res* and *aliquid* among the number of transcendentals. As he explains, *res* only formally signifies the quiddity of a thing in the sense of R1, that is, as *ratum* or as that which has a real essence (RE). "Thus, many think *res* to be more of an essential predicate than being [*ens*] itself."[164] In a similar way, *aliquid*, insofar as it immediately opposes nothing (*nihil*), does not formally add any distinct *ratio* to being. Since *res* and *aliquid* have the same intension as being itself, they would be nothing more than synonyms for being.

The second transcendental viewpoint holds that, in addition to the traditional six transcendentals just mentioned, there are many other transcendentals such as 'duration' (*durare*) and 'to be somewhere' (*esse alicubi*). Beyond these, and no doubt with Scotus in mind, Suárez identifies the transcendental disjuncts equal or unequal, finite or infinite, and actual or potential. Finally, still within the second viewpoint are some who think that the transcendental attributes involve negations and relations of reason which can be multiplied infinitely to include the 'same' (*idem*), the 'not impossible' (*non esse impossibile*), the 'loveable' (*amabile*), and the 'intelligible' (*intelligibile*).[165]

Developing his own position, Suárez's enumeration of transcendentals is straightforward and, given our immediately preceding discussion in the second section of this chapter, it will come as no surprise: "there are only three proper attributes of being [*passiones entis*], namely, *unum*, *verum*, and *bonum*."[166] What is more,

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[162] *DM* 3.2.7 (vol. 25, 109): "… passiones entis debent aliquid addere supra ens et non possunt addere aliquid positivum reale…."

[163] Ibid., 3.2.1.

[164] Ibid. (vol. 25, 107): "… unde multi censent magis essentiale praedicatum esse rem, quam ipsum ens."

[165] Ibid., 3.2.1.

[166] Ibid., 3.2.3 (vol. 25, 108): "… tres tantum esse proprias passiones entis, scilicet, unum, verum et bonum."

these attributes are only formally distinct (by reason) among themselves rather than distinct *ex natura rei*. In support of this transcendental enumeration Suárez appeals to the "common opinion of everyone who has written on the matter."[167] No names are mentioned in the present passage but one can easily point to Diego Mas and Pedro da Fonseca as thinkers, proximate to Suárez, who also identified *unum*, *verum*, and *bonum* as the sole transcendental attributes of being.[168] Published ten years before the *Disputationes metaphysicae*, Mas's *Metaphysica disputatio* explores the nature of transcendentality. Many philosophers following in the wake of Avicenna maintained the traditional six transcendentals, but, to Mas's mind, that is excessive. Both *res* and *aliquid* are synonymous with being and need not be considered distinct transcendental attributes.[169] Fonseca likewise thinks that those who regard *res* and *aliquid* as distinct transcendentals "fight" with the "old teaching," which holds that they are synonymous with being.[170] We already saw in the previous chapter that Suárez himself also views *res* and *ens* as synonymous albeit in such a way that *res* is reduced to the existential structure of *ens*. How that metaphysical determination comes to bear upon his thinking regarding transcendentality will be discussed presently.

3.2 Transcendental Reduction: *Res*

Limiting the transcendental attributes to the three named above raises two obvious questions. First, what is Suárez's own reason for identifying *res* and *aliquid* with *ens*? Second, how do the transcendentals in the second view—including Scotus's disjunctive transcendentals—fare in the Jesuit's estimate? With respect to the first question and more specifically regarding *res*, Suárez identifies two interpretive traditions that give *res* its meaning.

According to the first or "common" interpretation, *res* and *ens* are taken as synonymous. While sometimes both *ens* and *res* are said (*dicuntur*) of a being that actually exists, sometimes they prescind from actual existence.[171] As such, neither *ens* nor *res* are predicated of one another but are substantive with respect to the adjectival determinations that the transcendentals supply, such as when one says

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[167] Ibid. (vol. 25, 108): "Primo ex communi sententia omnium scribentium de hac materia."

[168] See Sanz, "La reducción suareciana de los trascendentales," 405-406.

[169] Mas, *Metaphysica disputatio* I, c. 2 (Cologne, 1616): "Tertia opinio est multorum Latinorum, qui secuti Auicennam in sua Metaphysica, sex tantum constituunt Transcendentia, quae sunt Ens, Vnum, Verum, Bonum, Res & Aliquid. Horum tamen Philosophorum opinio, etiam nobis displicet, ex eo quod afferunt, rem, & aliquid, esse Transcendentia ab ente distincta, cum reuera ab eo nullo modo differant; sed sint nomina synonyma, cum eo eandem naturam explicantia…" (8).

[170] Fonseca, *In Metaph.*, lib. 4, c. 2, q. 5, sec. 2 (Cologne, 1615): "… quia pugnat cum doctrina veterum, apud quod idem sunt, Ens, Aliquid, & Res, neque aliter haec nomina, quam ut synonyma usurpantur" (763F).

[171] *DM* 3.2.4. Here, we recall that, when Suárez speaks of "prescinding from existence," such precision does not involve the negation or denial of existence but simply its non-consideration. See *DM* 2.4.9.

"one being" (*ens unum*) or "true being" (*ens verum*).[172] What is important to note here is that in this common usage of *ens* and *res*, even *res* itself stands in an ordered relationship to existence insofar as *res* can, at times, signify actual existence. This existential reference is entirely consistent with the way Suárez developed his understanding of the meaning of *res* in relation to *ens* in *DM* 2.4. Such an existentially determinant sense of *res* is much different than what Henry of Ghent and Avicenna had espoused and can in no way be reduced to the indeterminate sense (R2) of *res a reor reris* that was discussed in the preceding chapter.

In the second, "rigorous" sense, *res* and *ens* are distinguished in such a way "that *res* prescinds from actual existence and signifies only quiddity."[173] In contrast, *ens*, which is taken from *esse*, signifies something precisely insofar as it is actually existing. In this second sense, *res* is not taken as an attribute of being but is predicated of something in a most quidditative sense. *Ens*, however, because it signifies the existence of something, is that which is extra-quidditative, at least with respect to creatures.[174] Thus, even in this more "rigorous" interpretation neither *ens* nor *res* are transcendental attributes.

The question now is: what sense of *res* is operative for Suárez when he excludes it from the status of being a transcendental attribute? According to Víctor Sanz, insofar as metaphysics considers nominal being and nominal being is that which signifies a quiddity, it is *res* taken in the second or "rigorous" sense that is operative. In the Suárezian metaphysical perspective '*ens*' is thus reduced to '*res*,' which metaphysically "devalues" participial being in its relation to actual existence.[175] Sanz goes so far as to suggest that the difference between Avicenna's notions of *ens* and *res* maps on perfectly to Suárez's distinction between participial being and nominal being. Moreover, the Suárezian terms also supposedly import the same meaning as the Avicennian doctrine regarding *ens* and *res*.[176] That doctrine is such, we recall from the previous chapter, that *res* is existentially neutral. According to Sanz, Suárez's rendering *ens* and *res* synonymous amounts to the reduction of *ens* to *res*, wherein the latter becomes identified, albeit not "explicitly," as the object of metaphysics.[177]

A number of things must be said about Sanz's interpretation. First, he fails to appreciate that in *DM* 3.2.4 Suárez is merely describing—without initial commitment—two interpretive traditions regarding *res* and why it is not considered an attribute of being.[178] While the second argument clearly dissociates *res* from any

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172 Ibid.

173 Ibid. (vol. 25, 108): "Quod si velimus haec duo [i.e., ens et res] in eo rigore distinguere… quod res praescindat ab existentia actuali, et meram quidditam significet…."

174 Ibid.

175 Sanz, "La reducción suareciana de los trascendentales," 407.

176 Ibid., 408.

177 Ibid., 409.

178 Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 154-55.

existential connotations, the first operates precisely in relationship to existence. Sanz assumes without justification that Suárez casts his lot with the second, "rigorous" sense of *res*, which is not necessarily the case.

Second, as Darge points out, it is only when responding to the dubative arguments in *DM* 3.2.10 that Suárez makes clear that the sense of *res* operative in his transcendental theory is the first, existentially-rich sense.[179] In that passage, Suárez explains that the difference between *ens* and *res* is etymological. "And thus *res* and *ens* are distinguished since this [*ens*] derives from *esse*, that [*res*] is taken from real quiddity."[180] What is more, it is not just 'quiddity' that *res* signifies but '*real* quiddity.' As we saw in the previous chapter, a 'real quiddity' is just the same as a 'real essence.' But a 'real essence' is 'real' insofar as it is apt to exist.[181]

Third, in his exposition of Suárez's so-called transcendental reduction, Sanz, much like Courtine, labors under the misunderstanding that the Jesuit regards *res* in the same way that Soto and Avicenna do. Since *res* and *ens* are identified, Sanz thinks that Suárez's doctrine of being "puts existence aside, and resolves itself in the key of essence."[182] Nevertheless, in the immediately preceding chapter I pointed out that Suárez's understanding of *res*, while clearly sharing some points of agreement with the tradition that developed from Avicenna regarding *res a ratitudine*, cannot ultimately be framed in an existentially neutral fashion as it was for Avicenna, Henry, and Soto.[183] One cannot infer from Suárez's transcendental "reduction" of *res* to *ens*, that the Jesuit has, in effect, reduced *ens* to *res* in Soto's sense to say nothing of Avicenna. If *res* and *ens* are synonyms, then, despite Sanz's claim to the contrary,[184] *res* itself has been transformed and assumed into the existential structure of the Suárezian conception of being. This is just the first "common usage" meaning of the term that Suárez identified in *DM* 3.2.4 and which he adapts to his own metaphysical purposes.

Finally, Sanz further misunderstands the Suárezian doctrine of being when he suggests that the Jesuit's distinction between being taken as a participle and being taken as a noun maps on to Avicenna's *ens* and *res*. *Res*, for Avicenna, positively excludes any consideration of existence which remains entirely accidental, whereas nominal being, on Suárez's view, does *not* deny or exclude existence but merely prescinds from it.[185] Again, we recall that nominal being and participial being do not constitute a division within being much less "an equivocation of double signi-

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179 Ibid.

180 *DM* 3.2.10 (vol. 25, 110): "Et ita distinguuntur res, et ens, quia hoc ab esse, illud a quidditate reali sumptum est."

181 Ibid., 2.4.5.

182 Sanz, "La reducción suareciana de los trascendentales," 416: "El ente, dejada ya a un lado la existencia, se resuelve en clave de esencia…."

183 Cf. Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 169-72.

184 Sanz, "La reducción suareciana de los trascendentales," 414.

185 *DM* 2.4.9.

fication,"[186] but one and the same reality considered either confusedly (noun) or in an *expressior* fashion (participle). In short, Suárez's identifying *res* with *ens* within a transcendental context remains entirely faithful to the determinations he had established in the preceding disputation regarding the *ratio entis* in relation to the existential orientation of being.

3.3 Transcendental Reduction: *Aliquid*

What about Suárez's transcendental reduction of *aliquid*? Does the reduction of *aliquid* to being turn Suárez's metaphysical barque in the direction of onto-logical or representationalist seas, as both Courtine and Sanz allege? Is it the case that *aliquid* (and thereby *ens*) represents a negation, that is, the negation of a negation (non-repugnance)? It strikes me that there is not enough stated in the passage in question to draw exactly that conclusion. In fact, the opposite conclusion can just as easily be inferred. The text does not state that what *aliquid* formally signifies is a negation. Rather, we are told that *aliquid* "is seen to signify most formally [*formalissime*] nothing other than being [*ens*] itself."[187] In signifying that which has some quiddity, *aliquid* coincides with the significations of 'thing' and 'being,' which, again, amounts to their synonymy.[188] But insofar as 'thing' and 'being'—at least in the present context—signify that which is "ratified and real" (*ratam et realem*), *aliquid* signifies not a negation but 'real being.'[189]

Be that as it may, there is some evidence for Sanz's interpretation when Suárez offers his *resolutio quaestionis*. The claim is made that *aliquid* and *ens* have the same intension, for which reason they are synonymous. If there is no distinction in their intensions, there is nevertheless an etymological distinction, which has a twofold character. First, *aliquid* is the same as that which has 'some quiddity.' But by means of that quiddity, '*aliquid*' stands outside of nothing (*nihil*) to which a quiddity is "contradictorily or privatively opposed."[190] Important to Sanz's interpretation is the fact that Suárez contends that "nothing [*nihil*], however, signifies the same as non-being [*non ens*] or not-having-some-entity or quiddity."[191] This explanation indicates a mutual and self-referential opposition between being (not-nothing) and nothing (not being).[192] Sanz argues that this double negation resides at the very heart of nominal being in the sense of that which has 'real essence' (RE). Appropriating

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186 Sanz, "La reducción suareciana de los trascendentales," 409: "… la equivocidad de la doble significación de ente…."

187 *DM* 3.2.1 (vol. 25, 107): "… nihil aliud formalissime significare videtur quam ipsummet ens…."

188 Ibid.

189 Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 178.

190 *DM* 3.2.5.

191 Ibid. (vol. 25, 108): "… nihil autem idem significat quod non ens, vel non habens entitatem ullam…."

192 Sanz, "La reducción suareciana de los trascendentales," 413.

Scotus's insight,[193] Suárez describes RE as that "which involves no repugnance in itself nor is it merely confected by the intellect."[194] Sanz concludes, "It is, therefore, a negation that first and radically determines the object of metaphysics."[195] But a negation, he goes on to say, is "nothing more than a relation of reason or extrinsic denomination on the part of the understanding."[196] From here, he concludes that the Suárezian metaphysics—wherein *ens* and *aliquid* are fused into an identity—is ultimately concerned just with a thought-object. If such is the case, then Suárez has indeed shifted metaphysics toward an onto-logic or mentalism. Here, the '*logizistische Deutung*' discussed in the previous chapter is reasserted, except this time Sanz directs it to an exposition of Suárez's transcendental theory.

Critical of Sanz's interpretation, Darge protests that it shares the same shortcomings as the previously-discussed 'logicalizing interpretation.' Briefly, Sanz's interpretation, like that of Courtine, Doyle, and Rompe, is incomplete because it fails to take into account the full context of the passage in which non-repugnance is introduced.[197] Non-repugnance, as we saw, only explicates a certain aspect of being, namely, that a real being is *not* merely a *fictum*. Freedom from self-contradiction is not enough to constitute *real* being, for that would hardly make metaphysics different from logic. The 'negative' explanation serves merely as "a first external approximation" (*eine erste äußere Annäherung*) that is filled out with the 'positive' account that Suárez immediately adds.[198] In a positive sense, a real essence (RE) can be understood as that which is a principle or root (*radix*) of real effects. In other words, RE is not just what evades contradiction but is that which can bring about or effect the very reality of something. More than that, RE is, as we saw, "that which of itself is apt to be or to exist really."[199] Once again, an *ordo ad esse* is central to the Suárezian account of being. If Suárez fundamentally understands being in terms of existence and reduces *aliquid* to being, then *aliquid* itself cannot only have an exclusively negative function (i.e., the denial of self-contradiction). *Aliquid* must also bear witness to the existential orientation of being.

Nevertheless, Ludger Honnefelder thinks that the 'aptitude to existence' itself consists simply in the double negation of the "not contradictory." "The purpose of double negation is to capture that 'minimal moment' of being separated from nothing, which is common to *all* beings and on the basis of which they are referred

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193 See Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 36, q. un., n. 50.

194 *DM* 2.4.7 (vol. 25, 89): "… dicimus essentiam realem esse, quae in sese nullam involvit repugnantiam, neque est mere conficta per intellectum."

195 Sanz, "La reducción suareciana de los trascendentales," 413: "Es, por lo tanto, una negación lo que determina primera y radicalmente al objeto de la metafísica."

196 Ibid.: "… no es más que una relación de razón o denominación extrínseca obra del entendimiento."

197 Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 177.

198 Ibid., 2.4.7.

199 Ibid. (vol. 25, 89-90): "… unde solum dicere possumus essentiam realem eam esse quae ex se apta est esse, seu realiter existere."

to as 'being.'"[200] To support his claim, Honnefelder points to *DM* 6.4.7 where Suárez directly inquires into what is meant by '*aptitudo*.' There, the meaning of 'aptitude' unfolds according to two conditions: (1) freedom from internal contradiction (i.e., non-repugnance) and (2) the power of some cause (viz., God) to bring that apt thing into existence. Since the second condition is extrinsic to the apt being, only the first condition pertains to its own intrinsic structure: "the objective aptitude of a possible thing to exist is not on the part of those [things that are created] except for a certain non-repugnance." If it is the case that non-repugnance resides at the inner core of being as its "decisive moment,"[201] then it would seem that interpreters such as Courtine and Sanz are validated in their claims that Suárez operates in terms of an onto-logic. Nevertheless, I think Honnefelder's claim is problematic for three reasons.

First, while it is the case that 'non repugnance' is mentioned with respect to *aptitudo*, this is on the part of certain 'respondents' whose positions Suárez reports. That is, the aptitude to be in many pertains to nature taken just as it is in itself (*secundum se*) and is "founded upon the non-repugnance of a nature to be in many things."[202] What is more, it is not entirely clear that the '*aptitudo ad existendum in multis*' is metaphysically equivalent to the '*aptitudo ad esse*' that Suárez describes in *DM* 2.4. One sympathetic to Honnefelder may nevertheless respond that the '*aptitudo ad existendum in multis*' at the very least implies an '*aptitudo ad esse*.' Even if one were to concede that claim, which I think is open to debate, Honnefelder still misidentifies the text's main emphasis. This leads to the second problem.

The thinkers against whom Suárez argues hold that the '*aptitudo ad existendum in multis*' is a certain positive mode that pertains to nature antecedent to the operation of the intellect. A qualification is then made that such an aptitude can only pertain to nature in potency and not in act, "since an actually existing nature does not have such an aptitude [to be in many] nor such a mode of being."[203] Suárez is not persuaded by such reasoning because to say that such an aptitude can never *actually* exist is simply to deny that it is a *real* being. "A real being only is in relation to the act of being [*ad actum essendi*]; now that which is entirely repugnant to the act of being cannot be understood to fall under the scope of real being; therefore it is not able to be a thing

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[200] Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens: Die formale Bestimmung der Seiendheit und Realtiät in der Metaphysik des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit (Duns Scotus-Suárez-Wolff-Kant-Peirce)* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1990), 294: "Sinn der doppelten Negation ist es, jenes ›Minimalmoment‹ der Abgesetztheit vom Nichts festzuhalten, das *allen* Seienden gemeinsam ist und aufgrund dessen sie als »Seiendes« bezeichnet werden" (Emphasis in original.)

[201] *DM* 6.4.9 (vol. 25 220): "… aptitudo objectiva rerum possibilium ad existendum non est ex parte illarum, nisi non repugnantia quaedam…."

[202] Ibid., 6.4.7 (vol. 25, 219): "Respondent esse modum quedam positivum convenientem naturae secundum se, in quo fundatur non repugnantia naturae, ut sit in multis."

[203] Ibid. (vol. 25, 219): "… quia natura actu existens non habet talem aptitudinem, neque talem essendi modum."

or a real positive mode."[204] While non-repugnance is a feature of Suárez's analysis as a necessary condition for something's being real, Honnefelder does not draw attention to the fact that non-repugnance is not sufficient. Beyond non-repugnance, Suárez makes clear that some existential bearing—a relation to the act of being (*actus essendi*)—is necessary. It is existence itself, then, that makes something real.

Third, Honnefelder's appeal to Suárez's claim that a creature, of itself, only possesses freedom from contradiction as evidence that being itself is constituted by a double negation is misleading. The question Suárez addresses does not concern being, but, rather, a creature's metaphysical status as possible prior to its creation. I shall address Suárez's understanding of the nature of possibility in the next chapter more fully. For the present we may note that an essence or creature prior to its creation is "entirely nothing."[205] To say that something is possible is a function of extrinsic denomination with respect to God's creative power. Suárez has God's causal efficacy in mind in the passage to which Honnefelder alludes. The only reality that a real effect has prior to its creation is existing in the power (or virtue) of its cause. This is not "to be" *simpliciter* and intrinsically, but it is only called 'possible' through extrinsic denomination. It is not the case that the double negation of non-repugnance constitutes even a "minimal moment" of reality distinct from nothing, for a creature's essence prior to creation (even if non-repugnant) has no positive intrinsic reality whatsoever, no matter how "minimal."[206]

Be that as it may, beyond the relation of *aliquid* to that which is non-repugnant, Suárez identifies a second etymological explanation of *aliquid*, which, not insignificantly, he reduces to *unum*. Referring to Thomas's *De veritate* q. 1, a. 1 and the same etymological explanation provided therein, he states that *aliquid* derives from 'another what' (*alius quid*). Thomas utilizes this etymological explanation to argue for *aliquid*'s transcendental status. What *aliquid* formally signifies is something other than *ens*: namely, the distinction from another or the negation of identity with another.[207] Suárez, in contrast, regards *aliquid* as a consequence of *unum*, for *unum* signifies "what is undivided in itself and divided from another."[208] The negation of identity with another is already contained within the negation that pertains to *unum*, for which reason *aliquid* is not considered a distinct transcendental attribute of being.[209]

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[204] Ibid., 6.4.7 (vol. 25, 219): "… ens autem reale non est, nisi in ordine ad actum essendi; ergo, cui omnino repugnant actus essendi, non potest sub latitudine entis realis comprehendi; ergo nec potest esse res, nec modus realis positivus."

[205] Ibid., 31.2.1 (vol. 26, 229): "… essentiam creaturae, seu creaturam de se, et priusquam a Deo fiat, nullum habere in se verum esse reale, et in hoc sensu, praeciso esse existentiae, essentiam non esse rem aliquam, sed omnino esse nihil."

[206] Ibid., 6.4.9.

[207] Ibid., 3.2.6. See Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 181.

[208] Ibid. (vol. 25, 109): "Unum enim dicitur, quod est indivisum in se, et divisum a quolibet alio…."

[209] Ibid.

The question now is: which of these two etymological explanations does Suárez himself accept with respect to *aliquid*? Curiously, Sanz dismisses the second etymological explanation as having "the inconvenience of … identifying the attribute something with the one" for which reason, he says, Suárez "opts for the first etymology."[210] It is not clear why the second etymological explanation is "inconvenient" apart from the fact that it seems to challenge Sanz's thesis, namely, that *aliquid* ultimately signifies the negation of nothing. Whatever the reason, it is far from the case that Suárez opts for the first etymological explanation since he does not refer to it in his response to *DM* 3.2's dubitive arguments.[211] In his response to those arguments, Suárez maintains that *res* and *aliquid* are not numbered among the transcendental attributes because they are only etymologically diverse. Tellingly, Suárez then juxtaposes *aliquid* not with *ens*, but with *unum*. Whereas *unum* signifies the negation of internal division, *aliquid* signifies the negation of identity with another. That is to say, *aliquid* is resolved in terms of the second etymological explanation, which pertains to *unum*, and not the first, as Sanz suggests.[212] In fact, *unum* and *aliquid* signify the same attribute, "since the perfection of unity is required for those two [*aliquid* and *unum*]."[213]

If *aliquid* is reduced to *unum*, then like *unum* what *aliquid* principally signifies is not so much negation but the entitative perfection of being itself. The negation of division (i.e., Dn) that unity signifies, we recall, depends upon the metaphysically prior integral constitution of a being in a positive sense of division (i.e., Dp). The same priority of positive entitative perfection pertains to the division of being from non-being. What Suárez has in mind here is that a negation is always subsequent to an affirmation, for if not there would be an infinite regress. Being is not divided from non-being by a double negation in the sense of *non-nihil*, as Courtine and Sanz suggest, for it "is divided from non-being, not through some negation, but through itself."[214] Similarly, real being is not divided from fictitious being by a negation, "but formally through its own reality."[215] In the end, the claim that the Suárezian doctrine of being is ultimately constituted in virtue of negation and thus through an extrinsic denomination or an act of the intellect misses the mark.

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210 Sanz, "La reducción suareciana de los trascendentales," 411: "… tiene el inconveniente de que… el atributo algo se identifica con el uno… de aquí que opte por la primera etimología."

211 See Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition*, 181.

212 See Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 610.

213 *DM* 3.2.10 (vol. 25, 110): "… in re vero eamdem passionem significant, quia illa duo ad perfectam unitatem requiruntur."

214 Ibid., 4.1.18 (vol. 25, 120): "… ens dividitur a non ente, non per negationem aliam, sed per se…."

215 Ibid., 3.2.13 (vol. 25, 111): "… et ideo reale ens non proprie dividitur ab illo [i.e., ens fictum] per negationem, sed formaliter per suam realitatem…."

3.4 The Second Transcendental Perspective (Disjunctive Transcendentals)

What then of the second transcendental perspective that multiplies the number of transcendentals even beyond the traditional six? Given Suárez's reductive transcendental analysis, it should come as no surprise that he finds this view unacceptable as well. 'Duration' (*durare*) and 'to be somewhere' (*alicubi*) cannot be numbered among the transcendental attributes of being because they are features only of specific kinds of being. As such, they do not necessarily follow upon being as such, which would be requisite for a transcendental.[216]

More pressing is the question of the fate of the disjunctive transcendentals in the Suárezian doctrine. Given Suárez's understanding of being's transcendental immanence, the Scotistic notion of being as a *conceptus simpliciter simplex* has no place within his doctrine. Yet, it is precisely that notion of being as *simpliciter simplex* that not only determines the entire direction of the Scotistic transcendental theory, it also impels Scotus to defend the thesis of the univocity of being. I shall address the dynamics of univocity and analogy vis-à-vis being in the final chapter. For the present, it should be noted that if being is not contained within its differences or *passiones*, then the disjunctive transcendentals emerge coherently. Both 'finite' and 'infinite,' distinct from being, add to being so as to determine it. Since the nature of a transcendental on Scotus's view is not to have many individuals contained under a higher genus but, rather, to have nothing higher except being, infinite being and finite being are veritable instances of transcendentals.[217]

Yet, the notion that some genus or class would have nothing higher than it except being is meaningless since being is not distinct *ex natura rei* from anything and is already contained in every class, genus, attribute, difference, etc. Finitude-infinitude and the other disjuncts do not so much constitute transcendental attributes of being as they do divisions of being. They contract being rather than follow upon the *ratio entis* itself.[218] Thus, when Courtine accuses Suárez of "misunderstanding the Scotist thesis" because he rejects the disjunctive transcendentals,[219] Courtine simply fails to grasp the specificity of Suárez's doctrine of being and its attendant transcendental *explicatio*. If it were the case that Suárez operated with the same doctrine of being in mind as Scotus, then the Jesuit would have to assert the same transcendental theory or risk precisely the misunderstanding that Courtine alleges. But, as we have seen, it is far from the case that Suárez's doctrine of being is completely identical with Scotus's. Yes, there are points of continuity, especially

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216 Ibid., 3.2.11.
217 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 8, pars 1, q. 3, nn. 113-15.
218 *DM* 3.2.11.
219 Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 394.

regarding the quidditative aspect of being, but there are also undeniable and critically important differences.

Finally, Suárez disregards that which comes about through relations of reason as constituting transcendental attributes. While it may be the case that every being is identical with itself and diverse from another, 'identity' and 'diversity' are extrinsically denominated by reason. They are not intrinsic features of being itself.[220] As such, they do not count as true transcendental properties, since "mere operations of reason are not sufficient for attributes of being."[221] This explanation clearly calls into question Gracia's view that, for Suárez, transcendentals are just "ways of thinking and conceiving." The remaining putative transcendentals such as 'identity,' 'intelligible,' or 'lovable' can, Suárez thinks, simply be reduced to unity, truth, and goodness.[222]

4. Conclusion

We can see that, despite the widely divergent interpretations that Suárez's transcendental doctrine has received in recent literature, the core of that doctrine consists in being's essential and intrinsic inclusion within its *inferiora*. Suárez's portrayal of transcendentality in terms of its immanent containment is, of course, a matter of some historical significance, as Darge rightly highlights, since it establishes the key difference between Suárez's transcendental doctrine and that of Scotus. Philosophically, the immanent character of Suárez's transcendental doctrine emerges from an existential understanding of being itself. Being, whether in the form of a substance, accident, mode, etc., is simply that which is apt to exist.

The transcendental attributes, moreover, far from being thought-objects or mere relations of reason, are, as we have seen, clearly predicated upon the intrinsic structures of being itself in its relation to existence. While the transcendental attributes *connote* negations of relations of reason, what each transcendental attribute fundamentally signifies is the intrinsic perfection of being itself. Those who seek to eschew the realist mooring of Suárez's exposition of the transcendentals fail to take into account the foundation upon which his explanation stands. Suárez's transcendental doctrine is not a matter of reason's brooding over itself, as Kant was wont to say regarding transcendental idealism, but is simply an explanation of the inner and perfective structures of being.

But if no mere operation of the intellect is able to constitute the transcendental attributes of being, much less can it constitute being itself. Here, once again, the determining character of (real) being is existence. *Res* and *aliquid*, as employed

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[220] *DM* 3.2.12.

[221] Ibid., 3.2.13 (vol. 25, 111): "… et sunt mera opera rationis, quae non sufficiunt ad passiones entis…"; cf. ibid., 3.2.14 (vol. 25, 111): "… ut haec possunt formaliter dicere relationes rationis, non pertinent ad passiones entis…."

[222] Ibid., 3.2.14.

within Suárez's doctrine of being, do not extinguish the embers of an existential doctrine that might have survived from prior medieval accounts that focus on the *actus essendi*. Rather, as we have seen, Suárez is careful to recondition those terms such that they are assumed into the existential structure of being itself. In fine, Suárez's transcendental *explicatio entis* simply unfolds the contents of his existential doctrine of being.

Chapter Four

Being and Possibility[1]

In the preceding two chapters I have argued that the Suárezian doctrine of being ultimately centers upon an order to existence, "the perfection of all perfections."[2] Insofar as a being *exists* it is real, stands apart from fictions or mere thought-objects, manifests and discloses its inner structure through its own dynamic activities and operations,[3] and, together with all other real beings, falls under the objective concept of being in which they "*conveniunt in essendo*."[4] What that means is that, not only does existence constitute the reality of each and every being, it also establishes the very community (i.e., *ens in quantum ens reale*) that forms the adequate object of metaphysics itself. From the Suárezian perspective, then, outside of that which exists (i.e., being) there is simply *nothing*.

The interpretation I have offered stands in contrast to those interpreters (mentioned in the preceding pages) who reduce Suárez's thinking on being to an existentially inert doctrine of essence(s). Such an existential enervation is not without consequences—some deleterious—that many interpreters have readily highlighted. If existence is only the "complement" to essence, as Gilson suggests to be the case with Suárez, then being's reduction to an essence is just its reduction to the possible.[5] In a similar vein, Courtine argues that Suárez's "meditation upon essence and the possible" places the Jesuit into opposition with "the Thomist reflection on *esse* as the *actus essendi*."[6] But to reflect upon 'essence' and the 'possible' is simply to consider one and the same object since, for Suárez, "that is called being because it is *able to be*,"[7] which means that possibility is just the "condition of the real."[8] To the lights of many interpreters, the Suárezian metaphysics amounts to nothing more than a sorting through of mere *possibilia*. The upshot of such a perspective is that, apart from existence, there is not nothing, for there nevertheless remains what is possible—that is, something.

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[1] This chapter considerably expands upon material previously published as "Thomas Aquinas and Francisco Suárez on Possible Being," *Studium Filosofía y Teología* 40 (2017): 121-157.

[2] *DM* 31.13.23 (vol. 26, 306): "… ideo dicitur ipsum esse perfectio perfectionum omnium, et maxima omnium perfectionem."

[3] Ibid., 2.4.6-7.

[4] Ibid. 2.2.8.

[5] Gilson, *L'être et l'essence* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1962), 178.

[6] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1990), 401: "… d'une méditation de l'essence et du possible, à l'opposé de la réflexion thomiste sur l'*esse* comme *actus essendi*."

[7] Ibid., 229: "… ce qui est dit étant parce qu'il *peut être*" (emphasis in original).

[8] Olivier Boulnois, *Être et représentation: une généalogie de la métaphysique moderne à l'époque de Duns Scot (XIIIe-XIVe siècle)* (Paris: Presse Universitaire de France, 1999), 483: "Le passage au «possible reel» n'est autre que la considération de la possibilité comme condition du réel…."

For reasons advanced throughout the preceding chapters I believe interpretations that ignore the existential structure of the Suárezian doctrine of being and reduce it to the logically possible or even to a form of 'essentialism'—which is just the view that "attributes being to essences independently of their creation"[9]—are ultimately mistaken. Though Suárez understands nominal being, the subject of metaphysics,[10] as that which has a 'real essence' (RE),[11] such an essence is 'real,' as we have seen, precisely because "of itself it is apt to be or really to exist."[12] Be that as it may, might one push the issue and ask: what does it mean to be 'apt'? Could not one say that what is apt to exist is simply that which can or is able to exist? But if such is the case, then have we not gone full circle and alighted once again upon the possible? What is more, while that which is merely possible might not enjoy any existential status, is it not fair to say, along with Gilson, Courtine, Doyle, and those sympathetic to their approaches, that the possible is at least not-nothing (*non nihil*)? If possibility is not nothing, then does not Suárez's notion of RE, despite any tribute it pays to existence, remain committed to an essentialist metaphysics to which existence is entirely incidental?

Further still, Suárez—together with a number of theologians within the Society of Jesus, most notably Luis de Molina—maintains a particular theological thesis that would seem to reduce being to possibility. In the *De auxiliis* controversy that embroiled Dominican and Jesuit theologians during the end of the sixteenth century, Molina and Suárez appealed to divine middle knowledge in order to accommodate a robust sense of human freedom.[13] Middle knowledge grasps future contingents or *futuribilia* such that God knows under what circumstances a human agent would or would not cooperate with the sufficient grace provided so that that grace would then become efficacious. For example, under a certain set of contingent circumstances, God knows that Judas would accept thirty pieces of silver to betray Christ. God also knows, however, that perhaps under a different set of contingent circumstances (e.g., being offered only five or ten pieces of silver) that Judas would not betray Christ.[14] Though the actual existential state of affairs that history relates is such that Judas was not offered only five pieces of silver, but thirty, and betrayed Christ to the authorities, the possibility of Judas's remaining faithful would nevertheless seem to be (non-existentially) real.

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[9] See Jacob Schmutz, "Réalistes, Nihilistes et Incompatibilistes: Le débat sur les *negative truthmakers* dans la scolastique jésuite espagnole," *Cahiers de Philosophie de l'Université de Caen* 43 (2007): 139: "… d'accorder un être aux essences indépendamment de leur création."

[10] *DM* 2.4.3.

[11] Ibid., 2.4.5.

[12] Ibid. (vol. 25, 89-90): "… essentiam realem, eam esse quae ex se apta est esse, seu realiter existere."

[13] See, e.g., Suárez, *De gratia*, prolegomenon 2.

[14] For a discussion regarding the metaphysical implications of the *De auxiliis* controversy see the introduction to Alfred Freddoso, *On Divine Foreknowledge: Part IV of the* Concordia (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004).

Yet, are non-existent *futuribilia* or essences metaphysically meaningful in any way? Are they not simply nothing? As we have had occasion to see in Chapter 2, for Avicenna—whose thought, Courtine suggests, is "entirely determinate" for Suárez's project[15]—reality is constituted by more than the existence-non-existence binary, for beyond what actually exists there is the essential realm. An essence (=E), as Avicenna describes it, can be taken as it:

E1: exists in an individual thing (i.e., as a particular);
E2: exists in the intellect (i.e., as a universal); or
E3: just as it is in itself or *secundum se*.[16]

Of these three senses only E1 and E2 have any existential bearing. But that existential character, as was also noted earlier, is entirely accidental to an essence taken just as it is in itself (E3). To be a particular (E1) or a universal (E2) is a feature of the token itself precisely as a token, one might say, and not a feature of the type (E3). Avicenna's example of equinity illustrates this point: "Equinity itself is nothing other than only equinity; for in itself it is neither many nor one, neither existing in sensible [things] nor in the mind, nor is it some of these [things] in potency or in act, in such a way that these would be included within the essence of equinity."[17] If equinity in the sense of E3 does not actually exist, whether as E1 or E2, it does not, for that matter, lack any kind of being (i.e., an essential being), for, as we also recall from our previous discussions,[18] E3 carries along with it its own 'certitude' on account of which it is called '*res*.'[19] In short, attributing (non-existential) being to E3 is what fundamentally constitutes what we might call 'Avicennian essentialism.' While E3 is not actually something—in the sense either of E1 or E2—it is not altogether nothing for it has its own 'essential being.'[20]

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[15] Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 387.

[16] Avicenna, *Logyca* (ed. Venice, 1508; fol. 2rb): "Essentie vero rerum aut sunt in ipsis rebus: aut sunt in intellectum: unde habent tres respectus: unus respectus essentie est secundum quod ipsa est non relata ad aliquid tertium esse: nec ad id quod sequitur eas secundum quod ipsa est sic. Alius respectus est secundum quod in his singularibus. Et alius secundum quod est in intellectu."

[17] Avicenna Latinus, *Liber de prima philosophia sive scientia divina*, tr. 5, c. 1 (ed. S. Van Riet: Peeters-Leiden, 1980; 228): "Unde ipse equinitas non est aliquid nisi equinitas tantum; ipsa enim in se nec est multa nec unum, nec existens in his sensibilibus nec in anima, nec est aliquid horum potentia vel effectu, ita ut hoc contineatur intra essentiam equinitas, sed ex hoc quod est equinitas tantum."

[18] See ch. 2, p. 80 supra.

[19] See ch. 2, p. 80 supra.

[20] While apparently oblivious of Avicenna's influence on later medieval philosophy, Edith Stein develops her notion of *Wesenhaftes Sein* in almost the same way as Avicenna and Henry of Ghent in the process of integrating "Thomistic philosophy" into her phenomenological perspective. See Stein, *Finite and Eternal Being: An Attempt at an Ascent to the Meaning of Being* (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 2002), 87-103. With respect to this historical blind spot, James Collins has pointed out that Stein could have "profited from a reading of Avicenna." See Collins, *Crossroads in Philosophy: Existentialism, Naturalism, Theistic Realism* (Chicago, IL: Henry Regency Co., 1962), 103. For more on Stein in relationship to medieval thought, see my "Edith Stein and Medieval Metaphysics," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 85 (2011): 323-340.

While it might be far-fetched to identify Avicennia's E3 with the Suárezian doctrine of 'real essence' (RE) *tout court*, the Persian and Jesuit perspectives do nevertheless seem to coincide in terms of possibility. Adrian Pabst interprets Suárez precisely along these Avicennian lines since, for the Jesuit, "the reality of essences precedes the actuality of existence."[21] Here, it is important to note that the kind of 'possibility' at play in Pabst's claim is not logical possibility, which is just freedom from self-repugnance. Rather, it is the non-existential reality that pertains to Avicennian essentialism. As we shall see, for Suárez, to say that a horse, for example, is possible means not only (1) that its essence involves no contradiction (i.e., it is logically possible) but also that (2) there is some cause (God) that can bring something instantiating the essence of a horse into actual existence.[22] Importantly, to say that horseness is logically possible does not entail, at least not for Suárez, that the essence of horseness itself has any (real, non-existential) being.[23] Among Suárez's contemporaries, Francesco Albertini, an Italian Jesuit who taught philosophy and theology at Naples, espouses a form of Avicennian essentialism that is remarkable for its contrast to Suárez's teaching. Albertini addresses the following question: "whether the essence of a creature from eternity, before it exists according to *esse essentiae* is something real, actual, [and] positive."[24] The Italian Jesuit answers affirmatively: "The essences of creatures are not entirely nothing before existence, nor do they only have potential being in a cause, but from eternity they have an intrinsic, actual, absolute, quidditative or essential being [*esse*]."[25] Brian Embry rightly observes that such a metaphysical position, which he calls "Henrican Essentialism" (after Henry of Ghent's notion of *esse essentiae*), compromises Albertini's commitment to a creation *ex nihilo*.[26] This would be no less problematic for Suárez, who, on Pabst's read, allegedly accords a non-existential reality to RE. If to create is to bring something into existence *ex nihilo* and if a Suárezian 'real essence' (RE) precedes existence, on account of which it is 'apt' (as Pabst suggests), then RE would seem to fall outside

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[21] Pabst, *Metaphysics: The Creation of Hierarchy* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2012), 329. This work follows in the footsteps of John Milbank, who seems to find any non-Thomistic stream of medieval thought utterly repugnant.

[22] Later scholastic authors, such as Rodrigo de Arriaga, would mark this distinction in terms of possibility *in abstracto* (or also referred to as remote possibility) and possibility *in concreto*. The former denotes freedom from internal contradiction, but the latter signifies a relation to God as that which can bring the possible thing into actual existence. See Arriaga, *Cursus philosophicus*, Metaph., disp.2, sec. 1, subsec. 1 (Lyon, 1669).

[23] I shall return to this distinction below in section 4.1.

[24] Albertini, *Corollaria seu quaestiones theologiae* (Lyon, 1629: 1), tom. 2, d. 1, q. 1, n. 1: "Utrum essentia creaturae ab aeterno, ante existentiam sit secundum esse essentiae aliquod positivum reale actuale."

[25] Ibid., n. 12 (4): "Essentiae creaturarum non sunt omnino nihil ante existentiam, neque habent esse solum potentiale in causa, sed ab aeterno habent esse intrinsecum actuale absolutum quiddativum seu essentiae."

[26] Embry, "Francisco Suárez on Eternal Truths, Eternal Essences, and Extrinsic Being," *Ergo: An Open Access Journal of Philosophy* 4.19 (2017): DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/ergo.12405314.0004.019.

the scope of God's creative power. It is not lost on Suárez, however, that attributing being of any sort to RE would betray the Christian tradition's commitment to the claim that "all things came into being [ἐγένετο] through [God] and without Whom nothing came into being [γέγονεν]."[27]

More than simply attributing being to unactualized essences, E3 also seems to exercise control over the divine science itself. Jacob Schmutz draws attention to one of the great metaphysical problems that vexed the speculative efforts of many late scholastic thinkers and which resides at the intersection of philosophy and theology, namely: "the explication of what the *essentia* of a thing is and the question of knowing whether or not it depends upon God."[28] In addressing this matter, the late scholastic Franciscan thinker, Bartolomeo Mastrius, coins the term '*coexigentia*' to identify a thesis particular to certain scholastics that maintained a necessary mutual inter-determining relation between God and a possible creaturely essence.[29] More specifically, the issue pertains to how God either knows or is capable of creating certain (possible) essences.[30] This relationship, moreover, is not predicamental and is a mixed one such that while creatures are really related to God in the sense of being metaphysically dependent upon God as an effect upon a cause, God is only logically or rationally related to creatures.[31] In short, what is at issue is what the scholastics designate as a 'transcendental relation.' Nevertheless, there remains a coexigency, to use Mastrius's term, between God and the possible essence. What this means is that if some being x is possible, then x is related to God as essentially dependent. But God is also necessarily related to x as being able to produce or create x. As Schmutz puts it, "The concept of omnipotence thus presupposes an intrinsic link between the impossibility of being made and the impossibility of doing, the possibility of doing and the possibility of being made."[32] This is true not just for divine omnipotence but also for the divine cognition in relation to possible essences. What is more, if we are to believe Girolamo Fasulo, a Neapolitan Jesuit operating in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centruies, Suárez was among

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[27] John 1:3. While the Latin Vulgate reads: "… omnia per ipsum facta sunt et sine ipso factum est nihil quod factum est," the Greek text's use of ἐγένετο and γέγονεν portrays the very coming into existence or into being of creatures through God's creative act. Cf. Schmutz, "Réalistes, Nihilistes et Incompatibilistes," 133.

[28] Jacob Schmutz, "Bartolomeo Mastri et la mouche," in eds., Jacob Schmutz and Marco Forlivesi, *Rem in seipsa cernere: Saggi sul pensiero filosofico di Bartolomeo Mastri (1602-1673). Atti del Convegno di studi sul pensiero filosofico di Bartolomeo Mastri da Meldola (1602-1673), Meldola – Bertinoro, 20-22 settembre 2002* (Padua: Il Poligrafo, coll. "Subsidia mediaevalia Patavina" nº 8, 2006), 470: "… l'explication de ce qu'est l'*essentia* d'une chose et la question de savoir si elle depend ou non de Dieu."

[29] Mastrius, *Disputationes theologiae*, disp. 3, q. 1, n. 8 (Venice, 1719: 105).

[30] Schmutz, "Bartolomeo Mastri et la mouche," 472.

[31] For more on the medieval account of various kinds of relation see Mark Henninger, *Relations, Medieval Theories, 1250-1325* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

[32] Schmutz, "Bartolomeo Mastri et la mouche," 483: "Le concept de toute-puissance suppose donc un lien intrinsèque entre l'impossibilité d'être fait et l'impossibilité de faire, la possibilité de faire et la possibilité d' être faire."

the first thinkers to support '*coexigentia*' even if only *avant la lettre*.[33] John Doyle seems to have been attuned to this aspect of Suárez's thought and notes in clear amazement, "fantastic as it may sound, if these non-repugnant possibles were not in themselves what they are, then there would not only be no divine Word but also no divine omnipotence, no divine science, and even no God."[34]

The situation regarding possibility that Pabst and Doyle note, while related, actually pertains to two different aspects of possibility. There is, on the one hand, the entitative status of a possible *qua* being (i.e., the question of its very being) and, on the other hand, the modal status of a possible *qua* possible.[35] It may be the case that while God is responsible for the very being of possibility, God is not, however, responsible for the modal status of that same possible, which status emerges as a function of the possible's eidetic nature. Pabst's claim that Suárezian essence is antecedent to existence suggests that the possible is entitatively independent from God, which would be a clear repudiation of any creation metaphysics to which Suárez, precisely as a Christian theologian, is beholden. A creation metaphysics (=CM) maintains at least three theses:

> CM1: God alone is being *per essentiam*;
> CM2: any being that is not God either (a) depends directly upon God for its being or (b), through an essentially ordered causal sequence, ultimately depends upon God for its being;
> CM3: prior to God's creation and apart from God, there is absolutely nothing.[36]

On Pabst's read, Suárez's notion of RE violates CM2 and CM3. Doyle, however, mis-construes Suárez's discussion of the modal character of the possible and takes it to be a discussion of its entitative status, for which reason he thinks that Suárez entirely subverts a creature's relation to God. While these two senses of possibility (i.e., its entitative status and modal character) may be related, it is crucial to keep the two distinct in pursuing their ultimate metaphysical explanations.

With that in mind, in the present chapter I examine Suárez's thinking regarding possibility and argue that: (1) the possible of itself posits nothing in reality whatsoever; (2) it is entirely consistent with CM1, CM2, and CM3; (3) and it remains consistent with Suárezian doctrine of being that I have thus far articulated. While I shall also treat Suárez's discussion of the modal status of a possible relative to the divine intellect, such a consideration is secondary to and distinct from the metaphysical concerns that lead some to identify the object of metaphysics as the set of *possibilia*.

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[33] Ibid., 471.

[34] Doyle, "Suarez on the Reality of the Possibles," in ed. Victor M. Salas, *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548-1617)* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010), 37.

[35] Cf. Tobias Hoffmann, "Duns Scotus on the Origin of the Possibles in the Divine Intellect," in ed., Stephen F. Brown, Thomas Dewender, and Theo Kobusch, *Philosophical Debates at Paris in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 360.

[36] By 'prior,' I mean logically, not temporally, prior.

Given that Suárez develops his position in conversation with the scholastic tradition that precedes and surrounds him, it will be important to sketch, even if only in brief outline, some of the decisive features of that tradition as it confronts the question of possibility vis-à-vis the commitment to a creation metaphysics. Offering such a sketch is important for four reasons. First, there can be no doubt that Avicenna's metaphysics plays an important role in Suárez's own doctrine of being. Yet, if Suárez is going to maintain a coherent sense of creation *ex nihilo*, his account of RE cannot be identical to Avicenna's E3. It will be important to show how this is the case. Second, as discussed in Chapter 2, Suárez admittedly takes his place upon a trajectory that emerged from Avicenna's thinking and which developed a number of metaphysical strategies for defending a creation metaphysics, while maintaining certain insights from Avicenna's quidditative account of being. Suárez would thus be able to utilize some of those strategies—albeit modified for his own purposes—within his own account of possibility. Third, in that tradition Duns Scotus offers a perspective that Suárez finds compelling and adapts to his own purposes. But, as is often the case with Scotus, the Franciscan develops his thinking on the nature of possibility as a repudiation of Henry of Ghent's doctrine, which itself bears a strong resemblance to Avicenna's essentialism. Accordingly, tracing that development of possibility within the Avicennian arc will help frame and make clearer Suárez's own position regarding possibility in such a way that his account of RE cannot ultimately be reduced to E3. Fourth, I consider the thought of Thomas Aquinas in relation to Suárez's theses. Thomas's account of God's cognition of creatures and the structure of possibility play an important role in Suárez's doctrine, but will need to be balanced with the competing claims of Duns Scotus.

1. The Imitation Model

The imitation model of possibility, which holds that whatever can imitate the divine essence is possible and whatever cannot is impossible, served as common teaching within the Middle Ages. Thinkers such as Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Henry of Ghent, and Godfrey of Fontaines all accounted for possibility in terms of imitation of the divine essence; yet the imitation model of possibility was itself as varied as were the doctrines of the aforementioned thinkers. Henry of Ghent's position, for example, can be considered a form of extreme realism insofar as he attributes being to the non-actualized essential structure of a creature's essence. I discuss this momentarily. For his part, however, Thomas Aquinas rejects the claim that a merely possible (creaturely) essence has any entitative status at all. For Thomas, a thing is called possible (=P) either (P1) in relation to some underlying potency (*potentia*) or (P2) without respect to any potency whatsoever.[37] The difference between P1 and P2, as Thomas explains, is the difference between 'relative'

[37] Thomas, *De potentia Dei*, q. 3, a. 14.

and 'absolute' possibility.[38] The possibility of P1 is relative either to some extrinsic cause (P1A) capable of producing the possible object or to an underlying subject in potency (P1B). In the case of non-existing essences, Thomas cannot develop the meaning of their possibility in terms of P1 since "the Catholic faith supposes that all that is other than God, at some time was not."[39]

For the Christian theologian, P2 has the salutary character of presupposing no being or reality whatsoever on the part of *possibilia*.[40] The entire scope of possibility is thus transferred to God in terms of what God has the power to create. Yet, this approach to possibility only seems to push the question back a step—for what determines what God can create? Thomas's answer to this question is 'imitation,' which involves both (1) a causal relationship of similitude between God and creature and (2) the means for God to know things other than Himself.[41] If God is able to know something (x) other than Himself, God can only know x through Himself for otherwise God would stand in potency to x. To explain how God enjoys such knowledge, Thomas tells us: "[God], however, sees other things not in themselves, but in Himself, inasmuch as His essence contains the similitude [*similitudo*] of other things from Himself."[42]

What is at issue here for Thomas are just the divine ideas. "An idea does not name the divine essence inasmuch as it is essence, but inasmuch as it [i.e., the idea] is a similitude or *ratio* of this or that thing."[43] Nevertheless, a divine idea is identical with the divine essence,[44] which means that one need not appeal to any putative reality apart from God to account for possibility. Each idea is simply one particular aspect according to which a creature can imitate the divine essence. What is more, if God has perfect cognition of Himself, then, Thomas reasons, God must have an idea corresponding to every *possible* manner in which the divine essence can be imitated. "For [God] perfectly knows His essence itself, when He knows every mode

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38 Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 25, a. 4.

39 Thomas, *De potentia Dei*, q. 3, a. 14 (ed. Marietti, 1927, 88): "Supponit enim fides catholica omne id quod est praeter Deum, aliquando non fuisse."

40 Cf. John Wippel, "The Reality of Non-existing Possibles according to Thomas Aquinas, Henry of Ghent, and Godfrey of Faintaines," in *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas*. Studies in the History of Philosophy, vol. 10 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1984), 167: "… there is no place within Thomas's metaphysics for any eternally preexisting possible that would enjoy some kind of being in distinction from that of the divine essence itself."

41 Metaphysical similitude plays a crucial role in Thomas's metaphysics of participation, especially for Louis-Betrand Geiger, who views it as the centerpiece of participation. See his *La participation dans la philosophie de S. Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1942), esp. part 2. For a different and equally influential view of Thomas's doctrine of participation spelled out in terms of the composition of *esse* and essence, see Cornelio Fabro's famous *Participation et causalité selon S. Thomas D'Aquin* (Louvain-Paris: Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1961).

42 Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 14, a. 5 (ed. Leonine, vol. 4, 172): "Alia autem a se videt non in ipsis, sed in seipso, inquantum essentia sua continent similitudinem aliorum ab ipso."

43 Ibid., I, q. 15, a. 2, ad 1 (ed Leonine, vol. 4, 202): "… idea non nominat divinam essentiam inquantum est essentia, sed inquantum est similitudo vel ratio huius vel illius ratio."

44 See *In Sent*. I, d. 19, q. 5, a. 3, ad 2; *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 3, ad 3; *Summa theologiae* I, q. 15, a 1, ad 3.

according to which He is knowable. [God], however, is not only able to know Himself as He is in Himself, but according to which He is participable [*participabilis*] according to some mode of similitude by a creature."[45]

According to Thomas, the relation of imitability itself with respect to the divine essence establishes the parameters of possibility. Henry of Ghent follows suit but goes even further and attributes a certain (essential) being to that imitative relationship. Avicenna's threefold account of essence clearly determines Henry's thinking. Using 'animal' as an example, Henry virtually repeats Avicenna's doctrine:

> For animal accepted with its accidents in singulars is [1] a natural thing [*res naturalis*]; but accepted with its accidents in the mind [*in anima*], it [2] is a thing of reason [*res rationis*]; but taken in itself [*secundum se*] it [3] is a thing of essence [*res essentiae*] of which it is said that its being [*esse*] is prior to its being of [1] nature or [2] reason.[46]

What corresponds to Avicenna's essence taken as it is in itself (E3) is what Henry describes as *esse essentiae*. Such essential being is not nothing, but it is indifferent to any existential instantiation whether as an individual or as a universal in the mind. But, unlike Avicenna, Henry's *esse esssentiae* is constituted in its being (*esse*) through an imitative relationship to a formal exemplar in the divine mind in which *esse essentiae* participates.[47] Indeed, it is precisely in a creaturely essence's relation or order to the divine essence (of which the creaturely essence is a mere similitude), that the creaturely essence "has being [*esse*]."[48] Such essential being, however, is distinct from the *esse existentiae* which a "creature does not have from its essence, but from God, inasmuch as it is an effect of the divine will in accordance with its exemplar in the mind of God."[49] Unlike *esse essentiae*, which is eternal in its relation of similitude to the divine essence, *esse existentiae* comes about at the temporal instant when God decides to create a creature. We see, then, that these two modes of being, *esse essentiae* and *esse existentiae*, correspond to the divine intellect in terms of an exemplar relationship and to the divine will in terms of an efficient relationship.

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[45] Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 15, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, vol. 4, 202): "Ipse enim essentiam suam perfecte cognoscit: unde cognoscit eam secundum omnem modum quo cognoscibilis est. Potest autem cognosci non solum secundum quod in se est, sed secundum quod est participabilis secundum aliquem modum similitudinis a creaturis."

[46] Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibetum* III, q. 9 (Paris, 1518; reprint Louvain, 1961; fol. 61rO): "Animal enim acceptum cum accidentibus suis in singularibus, est res naturalis: acceptum vero cum accidentibus suis in anima, est res rationis: acceptum vero secundum se, est res essentiae de qua dicitur quod esse eius est prius quam esse eius naturae, vel rationis."

[47] Ibid., I, q. 9 (fol. 7rZ): "… esse habet essentia creaturae essentialiter: secundum tamen participative: inquantum habet formale exemplar in deo."

[48] Ibid., X, q. 7 (fol. 416rH): "… immo ipsa creatura essentia sua qua est id quod est, habet esse, non quantum est essentia secundum se et absolute considerata: sed ut considerata est in ordine et comparatione ad divinam essentiam. Inquantum enim ipsa re ipsa absque omni absoluto addito est similitudo divinae essentiae secundum rationem causae formalis convenit ei esse essentiae."

[49] Ibid. (fol. 7rZ): "… esse non habet creatura ex sua essentia: sed a deo: inquantum est effectus voluntatis divinae iuxta exemplaris eius in mente divina."

We recall from Chapter 2 that, for Henry, having a corresponding divine exemplar is that which constitutes a '*res*' in the sense of '*res a ratitudine*.' But since fictions do not have any corresponding divine exemplars they cannot be called '*res*' in the sense of '*res a ratitudine*' but only as *res a reor reris*.[50] In the present context, we might say that fictions, because they have no imitative relationship to a corresponding divine idea, lack *esse essentiae*. What is more, like Thomas, Henry argues that it is precisely through the divine ideas that God has knowledge of something beyond Himself. If God did not know through His own essence all the ways in which that essence could be imitated, "God would know nothing except His own essence and Himself."[51] Those exemplars within the divine essence, moreover, are the basis of real relations that creaturely essences have to God's intellect from eternity.[52] What is noteworthy here is that Henry maintains that God, in knowing creaturely essences, knows them not only as an imitation of His own essence but as somehow distinct from Himself. They are not just distinct as objects of God's cognition, they are distinct in being "something *simpliciter*."[53]

Finally, if *esse essentiae* serves as the means by which God knows things other than Himself,[54] then *esse essentiae* is the condition of possibility itself and determines the scope of the divine will in effecting the *esse existentiae* of this or that creature. Is it the case, then, that lacking *esse essentiae* renders something impossible? Henry answers affirmatively. Whatever has no *esse essentiae* or any exemplar in the divine mind "is in no way creatable."[55] Much as was the case for Avicenna, according to Henry, that which determines what is possible is essential being. Whatever lacks *esse essentiae* remains impossible in itself. But unlike Avicenna, Henry regards the very *being* of essence (*esse essentiae*) as constituted in a relationship of imitation to a corresponding divine exemplar.

In short, the imitation model seeks to establish the domain of possibility in terms of the multiplex manner in which the divine essence can be imitated. Yet, imitation is a relation, and all relations involve at least two or more terms. What, then, is being opposed to the divine essence as its term of relation? Is it something outside the divine being? Thomas is attuned to this concern when he explains that

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50 Henry of Ghent, *Summa quaestionem ordinariarum*, a. 34, q. 2.

51 Ibid. (fol. 345A): "… nihil deus cognosceret nisi suam essentiam et seipsam."

52 Ibid., *Quodlibetum* IX, q. 1.

53 Ibid., *Quodlibetum* IX, q. 2 (fol. 354): "Ista autem non sunt sic diminuta respectu entis quod deus est: et existentia in esse cognito: quin in illo esse sint aliquid ad per se essentiam quod natum est deo efficiente entia existere extra divinum intellectum praeter esse cognitum in esse existentiae… Est enim praedicamentum contentiuum talium rerum non secundum quod sunt in esse cognito, neque secundum quid sunt in esse vero: sed secundum quod sunt aliquid simpliciter." Cf. Wippel, "The Reality of Nonexisting Possibles," 177. See also José Gómez Caffarena, *Ser participado y ser subsistente en la metafisica de Enrique de Gante* (Rome: Pontifical Gregorian University, 1958), 30-35.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid., *Quodlibetum* IX, q. 1 (fol. 341L): "Unde non ens quod non est aliquid per essentiam: nec habet rationem idealem in deo: nullo modo est creabile."

the multiplication of the divine ideas—again, the divine essence's various forms of imitability—is determined not by the things themselves "but by the divine intellect comparing its own essence with these things."[56] This still raises the question: what are the "things" (*res*) to which the divine intellect compares itself? The metaphysical status of such 'things' becomes entitatively enriched, so to speak, in the case of Henry of Ghent, who, as we know, identifies them precisely as *esse essentiae*.

For his part, Thomas has no intention of positing any kind of coeternal reality outside of God, but insofar as he develops his account of possibility in terms of imitability and insofar as imitability is a relation, it is difficult to understand how the terminus of the imitability relationship—the "*res*," as Thomas calls it—does not enjoy some sort of non-existential reality. Richard Cross describes the situation succinctly: "if there are genuine relations of imitability in the divine essence, this requires that there are objects to which the divine essence is related; it requires, in short, that the divine essence is really imitated."[57] What is more, since God knows eternally the ways in which the divine essence can be imitated, it is equally difficult to understand how the metaphysical reality of the termini of God's imitability relations cannot themselves be eternal.

Henry of Ghent seemed content ultimately to embrace such a conclusion when he introduced a distinction between *esse essentiae* and *esse existentiae*. While Henry tried to relativize Avicenna's E3 to a theo-logic of the divine intellect and will, the success of that effort, especially to thinkers committed to a creation metaphysics, was in doubt. Though *esse existentiae* emerges through God's free creative act of will, that creative act is constrained by what is possible. For Henry, it is nothing other than *esse essentiae* which sets the parameters of possibility. While *esse essentiae* is itself relative to the divine essence of which the former is an imitation, *esse essentiae* remains a distinct reality from the divine essence that is co-eternal with it. In the end, CM3 is compromised.

2. Duns Scotus: *Esse intelligibile* and Possibility

Duns Scotus was keenly aware of the difficulties involved in an imitation model and emerged as a major critic of Henry's doctrine of *esse essentiae* for the reason that, at least to the Franciscan's lights, it did in fact undermine the notion of a creation *ex nihilo* (CM3). If something has true and essential being (*esse essentiae*), as Henry thinks to be the case, then even if it receives its existential being temporally, whatever has such being is not simply nothing, but something.[58] Scotus objects: "If a thing has essential being from eternity and through creation does not acquire

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[56] Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 15, a. 2, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, vol. 4, 202): "… sed ab intellectu divino, comparante essentiam suam ad res."

[57] Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus on God* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 62.

[58] Duns Scotus, *Lectura* I, d. 36, q. un., n. 13.

anything except existential being, which is a certain relation, creation is nothing other than making a new relation, and thus it seems less a matter of creation than alteration."[59] In other words, an 'eternal creation' is not really a creation at all since there is "a contradiction included in something's being created from eternity."[60]

Scotus's own doctrine of possibility is subject to significant scholarly controversy. Tobias Hoffman observes that most of that controversy pertains to the exact role that the divine intellect plays in determining the modal character of possibiles.[61] I do not intend to settle that controversy here and, fortunately, my main concern centers upon the entitative status of the possibles for the purpose of assessing Suárez's own account. Fortunately, there does appear to be relative agreement among scholars on that score.[62] As just noted, Scotus's account of possibility unfolds in his rejection of Henry's notion of *esse essentiae*, which rejection has a twofold consequence. First, imitation of the divine essence does not serve as a coherent explanation for the manner in which God knows creatures. From this follows the second consequence: that which is possible does not emerge as a function of imitation.[63] Consequently, Scotus develops his notion of *esse intelligibile* to account for both the divine cognition of non-created essences as well as their possibility. Importantly, *esse intelligibile* does not arise from any imitative relationship with the divine being but only from the supreme actuality of God's own creative cognition, which requires neither model nor archetype.[64]

Scotus gives a detailed account of divine cognition with an example of how God comes to know a stone as a thought-object.[65] He identifies several logical (as opposed to temporal) instants in a text that warrants quoting at length:

> In the first instant, God by reason understands His own essence as merely absolute; in the second instant [God] produces a stone in *esse intelligibile* and understands the stone such that thereupon is a relation in the understood stone to the divine intellection, but thus far there is no [relation] in the

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[59] Ibid., n. 16 (ed. Vatican, vol. 17, 464-65): "… si res habuit esse essentiae ab aeterno et per creationem non acquirat nisi esse existentiae, quod dicit respectum quedam, ergo creare nihil aliud erit quam facere unum respectum, et sic minus est creare quam alterare." For an exposition of Duns Scotus's critique of Henry of Ghent's doctrine of *esse essentiae* see Antonie Vos, *The Philosophy of John Duns Scotus* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 274-79.

[60] Ibid., n. 17 (ed. Vatican, vol. 17, 465): "Quaero igitur an lapis preceditis tam productionem secundum aliquod esse verum? Non potest hoc dici, quia tunc ante esse essentiae esset aliud esse verum extram animam; igitur omnino nihil ante illud esse. Igitur ista productio qua sic producitur lapis in esse essentiae, est alia cuius et de pure nihilo, igitur est creatio; igitur ab aeterno fuit creatio, quia alicuius et de nihilo,—quod est contra eos et contra veritatem: dicunt quod contradictionem includit quod aliquid creetur ab aeterno…."

[61] Hoffmann, "Duns Scotus on the Origin of the Possibles," 372.

[62] Ibid.

[63] For an excellent treatment of the relationship between God's self-knowledge and possibility throughout late medieval and late scholastic frameworks, see Michael Renemann, "Suárez's Doctrine of Concepts: How Divine and Human Intellection are Intertwined," in eds., Victor M. Salas and Robert L. Fastiggi, *A Companion to Francisco Suárez* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), c. 13.

[64] See Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 35, q. un., n. 47.

[65] God's own essence remains the primary object of the divine cognition.

> divine intellect to the stone; rather, the divine intellect terminates the relation 'stone-as-understood' to itself; in the third instant, perhaps, the divine intellect can compare its intellection to anything intelligible whatsoever … and thereupon comparing itself to the understood stone, it is able to cause in itself a relation of reason; and in the fourth instant it is able to reflect, as it were, about this relation caused in the third instant, and thereupon that relation of reason will be known. In such a way, therefore, a relation of reason is not necessary to understand the stone—just as if it were prior to the stone; as an object, on the contrary, [the relation] itself 'as caused' is posterior (in the third instant), and thus far it will be posterior itself 'as known,' on account of the fourth instant.[66]

It is only in the final instant, well after having produced something in *esse intelligibile*, that God compares that thought-object (i.e., the stone) to His own essence and understands a relation of reason. What is important to recognize here is that no relation of imitability (between a creature's essence and the divine essence) is required for God's knowledge of the stone's *esse intelligibile*.[67] Rather, the divine intellect itself "has a sufficient first act to produce everything else in *esse cognito*, and by producing that in *esse cognito*, the [divine intellect] itself produces [everything] as having dependence upon it as intelligence."[68] In producing *esse cognitum* or, what is the same, *esse intelligibile*, God does not in the "second instant" know that *esse intelligible* in terms of a relation to the divine essence, but just as it is in itself.[69] There is an implication to this claim. If imitation no longer serves as the basis of God's knowledge of things other than the divine essence, then likewise God's knowledge of His own essence no longer functions as the basis for possibility. The basis of possibility shifts, then, to what God produces in *esse intelligibile*,[70] which is to say that possibility follows from intelligibility.[71] No doubt with something such as Henry of Ghent's *esse essentiae* in mind, Scotus argues that possibility is not founded upon any being *simpliciter* but, instead, upon *esse cognitum*, which is just *esse intelligibile*.[72] Scotus's position is clear: in producing

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66 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 35, q. un., n. 32 (ed. Vat., vol. 6, 258): "Deus in primo instanti intelligit essentiam suam sub ratione mere absoluta; in secundo instanti producit lapidem in esse intelligibile et intelligit lapidem, ita quod ibi est relatio in lapide intellecto ad intellectionem divinam, sed nulla adhuc in intellectione divina ad lapidem, sed intellectio divina terminat relationem 'lapidis ut intellecti' ad ipsam; in tertio instanti, forte, intellectus divinus potest comparare suam intellectionem ad quodcumque intelligibile ad quod nos possumus comparare, et tunc comparando se ad lapidem intellectum, potest causare in se relationem rationis; et in quarto instanti potest quasi reflecti super istam relationem causam in tertio instanti, et tunc illa relatio rationis erit cognita. Sic ergo non est relatio rationis necessaris ad intelligendum lapidem—tamquam prior lapide—ut obiectum, immo ipsa 'ut causata' est posterior (in tertio instanti), et adhuc posterior erit ipsa 'ut cognita,' quia in quarto instanti."

67 Cross, *Duns Scotus on God*, 64.

68 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 35, q. un., n. 47 (ed. Vat., vol. 6, 264-65): "… intellectus divinus est in actu per essentiam suam ut est ratio intelligendi, habet actum primum sufficientem ad producendum omne aliud in esse cognito, et producendo illud in esse cognito, producit ipsum habens dependentiam ad ipsummet ut intelligentiam."

69 Ibid., I, d. 35, q. un., n. 51.

70 Ibid., I, d. 43, q. un., n. 14.

71 Cf. Hoffmann, "Duns Scotus on the Origin of the Possibles," 364.

72 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* II, d. 1, q. 2, n. 93.

an object in *esse cognito* or *esse intelligible* God, "by His intellect produces the possible in possible being."[73]

Thus far we see that, for Scotus, what is possible follows upon what God thinks, which is to say, what God produces in *esse intelligibile*. But does this not raise a question: what (if anything) determines what God *can* think? Scotus provides us with an answer to this question in a passage he devotes entirely to the issue of possibility and impossibility, namely, *Ordinatio* I, d. 43, q. *unica*. There, the question is: "whether the first reason for a thing's impossibility occurs on the part of God or the makeable thing [*factibilis*]?"[74] For Scotus, this question pertains to the omnipotence of God, which is a function of the divine will. If it were the case that possibility comes about exclusively through the prerogative of the divine will, defending against claims of divine caprice or arbitrariness would be difficult. But in associating possibility with *esse intelligibile*, a product of the divine intellect (not will), Scotus has forestalled precisely such accusations. There is a sense in which the divine intellect is 'prior' to the divine will in that the former, as if a natural cause, produces *esse intelligibile*.[75] Thus the will, according to which God is called 'omnipotent,' "does not have an object that is first possible, except for the divine intellect, producing that [object] first in *esse intelligibile*."[76] That is to say, if possibility 'precedes' the divine will, that is only because the divine intellect has produced an object (*esse intelligibile*) that the divine will can realize into being *simpliciter*.

Scotus describes the production of *possibilia* according to two (logical) moments of nature. In the "first instant of nature," he says *esse intelligibile* is produced by the divine intellect. In the "second instant of nature" that *esse intelligible* has formally of itself possible being "since to be [*esse*] is not formally repugnant to itself, but having necessary being through itself is repugnant to it."[77] We see that in the "first instant" what Scotus has in mind is the production of some possible object *x*—which is constituted by its own intelligible or eidetic nature—into being (i.e., *esse intelligibile*). In the "second instant of nature" what is at issue is the modal status that flows formally from the eidetic nature of *x* in terms of non-repugnance. In contrast, the impossible involves incompossibles (*incompossibilia*), which precisely on account of their own formal (eidetic) natures, cannot be united because they are mutually repugnant or contradictory.[78]

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[73] Ibid., I, d. 43, q. un., n. 16 (ed. Vat., vol. 6, 359): "… Deus suo intellectus producit possibile in esse possibili…."

[74] Ibid. (ed. Vat., vol. 6, 351): "Utrum prima ratio impossibilitatis rei fiendae sit ex parte Dei vel rei factibilis."

[75] Ibid., I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 4, n. 268.

[76] Ibid., I, d. 43, q. un., n. 14 (ed. Vat., vol. 6, 358): "… tamen per ipsam potentiam 'sub ratione qua est omnipotentia' non habet obiectum quod sit primo possibile, sed per intellectum divinum, producentem illud primo in esse intelligibili…."

[77] Ibid. (ed. Vat., vol. 6, 358): "… quia formaliter non repugnant sibi esse et se ipso formaliter repugnant sibi habere esse necessarium ex se…."

[78] Ibid., n. 16.

We may consider Scotus's account of possibility and impossibility with the following set of examples. Consider possible objects *x* and *y*. Object *x* is constituted by a certain eidetic nature that is characterized by the features *a*, *b*, and *c*. In contrast, *y* is a distinct eidetic nature that is itself characterized by *a*, *b*, and ¬*c*. For Scotus, both *x* and *y* depend upon God to be thought, which is just to be produced in *esse intelligibile*. But God cannot think *x* without thinking *a*, *b*, and *c*; nor can God think *y* without thinking *a*, *b*, and ¬*c*. What this means is that the constitution of *x* as *a*, *b*, and *c* is independent of God's will. The same is the case for any other possible object. What is more, since *a*, *b*, and *c* with respect to *x* and *a*, *b*, and ¬*c* with respect to *y* do not involve any contradiction among themselves, both *x* and *y* of themselves (*ex se*) and—without any relation to the divine will—are possible. Nevertheless, *x* and *y* are incompossible with each other—which is to say, the object *xy* (as in the case of a chimera) is impossible—because *xy* would involve the simultaneous and contradictory positing of *c* and ¬*c*.[79] One might say then, as Richard Cross does, that in our example *x* and *y* are "subjects" of modal properties which, in the first instance of nature, are prior to what is possible and impossible. "It is in this sense that possibilities come from God: God produces the subjects [in our example *x* and *y*] that are the bearers of these modal properties."[80]

Even from this very limited discussion of Scotus's account of possibility, we see that the Franciscan accomplishes two things. First, he repudiates the imitation model of possibility as inadequate to the task of preserving a creation metaphysics. As such, any account of possibility developed thereafter will need to bear that critique in mind. Second, possibility is not construed along the lines of existentially inert essences that dangle eternally, before the divine, pre-volitional gaze as God considers how providentially to order the states of affairs that make up the world. Rather, possibility emerges as a consequence of what the divine intellect produces in *esse intelligibile*. There is no trace of being, however shadowy or opaque, that escapes God as its divine author. It is no surprise, then, that such a framework would be particularly captivating to Suárez, who, as we shall see, develops aspects of Scotus's thinking in his own account of possibility, especially with respect to divine cognition of creatures. Víctor Sanz is not far from the mark when he says that Suárez's doctrine is "inscribed in a tradition that has its roots in Scotism."[81] Nevertheless, it is just as true to say that Suárez's own account remains irreducible to that of Duns Scotus, for, as we shall presently see, the Jesuit attempts to pave a middle route between the Franciscan and Thomas Aquinas. In determining how it is that God knows creatures as possible, he incorporates the insights of both medieval masters.

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79 Ibid., n. 5.

80 Cross, *Duns Scotus on God*, 72-73.

81 Victor Sanz, *La teoría de la posibilidad en Francisco Suárez* (Pamplona: EUNSA, 1989), 13-14: "… se inscribe en una tradición de raigambre escotism…."

3. Suárez on the Divine Cognition of the Possibles

Suárez explores the issue of God's cognition of *possiblia* in *DM* 30.15 and in the third book of his *De divina substantia*. The main difference between the two discussions is that the latter goes into greater detail regarding the quasi-reflexive structure of divine cognition. There can be no doubt, Suárez thinks, that "God has knowledge of all things that are capable of being made according to their proper *rationes* and proper differences, by which they are distinguished among themselves, otherwise [God] could not produce them."[82] This is a fairly non-controversial statement to make for any theologian committed to divine omniscience, but the Jesuit immediately follows it with the claim that, in order to have such knowledge, it is not sufficient for God to grasp such possible creatures "only according to the being [*esse*] that they have in God [as their cause]" for that would not be to know them but to know God. Rather, God must also know creatures "according to their proper possible being."[83] In emphasizing the fact that God knows possible creatures in themselves Suárez appears to align himself with Duns Scotus, whose position, the Jesuit says, "does not lack probability."[84] Nevertheless, counterbalancing the Scotistic emphasis of knowing creatures as they are in themselves, Suárez confesses that Thomas Aquinas's claim that God knows creatures in Himself is "most true" (*verissima*) so long as it remains the case that God additionally knows possible creatures in themselves.[85]

In essence, Suárez does his best to chart a middle course between the theses of Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus, whose conclusions the Jesuit attempts to support. Suárez's explanation occurs in two stages, with the second stage "reversing," as Michael Renemann puts it, the perspective of the first.[86] First, says Suárez, the knowledge that God has of creatures cannot be direct or what God knows first,[87] for what God primarily knows is His own essence and then creatures only secondarily.[88] Moreover, the knowledge that God has of creatures is only "quasi-reflexive."[89] What it means for such knowledge to be 'quasi-reflexive' can only be understood, Suárez adds, by explaining how God forms a "first notion, concept

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[82] *De divina substantia*, lib. 3, c. 2, n. 1 (vol. 1, 196): "… certissimum est, habere Deum scientiam de omnibus rebus, quae fieri possunt secundum proprias rationes earum, propriasque differentias, quibus inter se distinguntur, alioqui non potest illas producere."

[83] Ibid. (vol. 1, 196): "Quia nisi cognosceret eas secundum esse proprium possibile, sed solum secundum esse, quod habent in Deo, hoc non esset creaturas cognoscere, sed se tantum…." Cf. *DM* 30.15.23.

[84] Ibid., n. 16 (vol. 1, 200): "Haec sententia [Scoti] sic exposita non caret probabilitate…."

[85] Ibid., n. 3.

[86] Renemann, "Suárez's Doctrine of Concepts," 324-25.

[87] *De divina substantia*, lib. 3, c. 2, n. 20.

[88] *DM* 30.15.25.

[89] *De divina substantia*, lib. 3, c. 2, n. 20. Suárez's discussion in *DM* 30.15.25 uses an inflection of the term '*resultantia*.'

and quasi-verbum of creatures."[90] Suárez thinks—in agreement with Thomas—that God proceeds towards an actual knowledge of creatures "by directly conceiving and representing them in Himself."[91] Indeed, it cannot be the case that God attains knowledge of creatures from anything intrinsic to creatures themselves, since the divine cognition is uncreated and anterior to every creature.[92]

With this divine self-knowledge posited, the second stage or reversal occurs in which a quasi-reflexive knowledge arises; through this, God knows something extrinsic to Himself, namely, possible creatures. Suárez thinks that God, in directly knowing Himself, must know Himself as knowing-possible-creatures, which was already granted in the first stage. But God's knowledge of Himself as knowing-possible-creatures depends upon the (logically) prior moment of (God's) actually knowing-possible-creatures, which is not to know possibles as an imitation of the divine essence or as a relation of reason to God, as Thomas had thought. Rather, like Scotus, Suárez holds that knowing-possible-creatures is just to know possibles in themselves (*in se*).[93]

I shall not pursue Suárez's account of divine cognition any further, since this would take me too far afield from my present concern; however, a question remains regarding Suárez's account. Does his claim that God knows creatures as possible in themselves prior to God's knowledge of Himself as knowing them as possible commit the Jesuit to the same position as Albertini, who admits that possible essences, prior to their existence, have a real, intrinsic essential being that is co-eternal with God? *Prima facie*, it may seem that the two Jesuits are of one mind, for one of Suárez's arguments establishing God's knowledge of possible creatures seems to posit such an essential reality. The argument claims that since God is infinitely intellective He has the power to know everything that is intelligible. But since each thing is intelligible insofar as it is *being*, and possible creatures are intelligible since they are at least possible *beings* (*entia possibilia*), God must likewise know possibles.[94] Nevertheless, while Suárez accepts this as an argument for the claim that God knows possible being, he marks a clear distinction between possible being and real being, for "no real, true, and actual being [*esse*] is posited in creatures thus known, but only possible being [*esse possibile*], which is not actual from eternity, except in the power of God."[95] Possible creatures are said to be known (*esse cognitum*) not from any real being (*esse reale*) that they have in themselves—which they lack entirely—but in

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[90] Ibid. (vol. 1, 201): "… hic autem inquiremus quomodo intelligendum sit, formare Deum (ut sic loquar) primam notitiam, seu conceptum et quasi verbum creaturarum…."

[91] Ibid. (vol. 1, 202): "… Deum prodire prius secundum rationem in actualem scientiam et cognitionem creaturarum, eas in se directe concipiendo et repraesentando."

[92] *DM* 30.15.25.

[93] *De divina substantia*, lib. 3, c. 2, n. 20.

[94] *DM* 30.15.22.

[95] *De divina substantia*, lib. 3, c. 2, n. 21 (vol. 1, 202): "… nullum esse reale, verum et actuali poni in creaturis si cognitis, sed tantum esse possibile, quod ab aeterno non est actu, nisi in potentia Dei…."

God as objects of knowledge. "From that being [*esse*], however, that creatures have in God, they are denominated 'known,' but this is only an *extrinsic denomination* in them and it is only able to be the foundation of some relation of reason."[96] What is more, clearly aware of his own commitment to a creation metaphysics, Suárez warns that one cannot attribute any greater reality to possibility—as did Henry of Ghent, Albertini, and, as we shall see, Capreolus—without risking "great error" both to faith and to natural reason.[97] What this means is that a possible being (1) has no intrinsic being unto itself and (2) is only called 'being' through extrinsic denomination in relation to God. Suárez explores the metaphysical implications of these claims in *DM* 31, which we must now consider.

4. Suárez on the Entitative Status of the Possibles

To return to the problem raised by the Avicennian framework, if the Islamic philosopher's account of E3 runs contrary to the Christian theologian's commitment to CM2 and CM3, then it seems the simplest solution would be to deny the reality of E3 altogether. This is what Thomas did,[98] and, as it turns out, Suárez employs the same strategy. The Jesuit is clear: prior to God's creation of a creature, that creature's essence "of itself has no true real being [*esse*], and in this precise sense of *esse existentiae*, the essence is not some thing [*rem aliquam*] but is *entirely nothing*."[99] For Suárez, unactualized essences lack not only existence, as Avicenna too had taught, but, contrary to Avicenna and against what Pabst alleges to be the case, they do not even possess the being of possibility or any intrinsic reality (E3) whatsoever. This is a simple enough maneuver to escape Avicennian essentialism, and it has the benefit of reducing all being to God's creative initiative, outside of which (at least prior to creation) there is absolutely nothing (CM3). What is more, Suárez's motive for this metaphysical decision is clearly theological: "This principle is not only true, but it is also certain according to faith."[100] As if offering a metaphysical reflection upon the contents of St. John's prologue (mentioned above),[101] Suárez holds that: "Only God is of Himself a necessary being, and without [God] nothing is made, and without His effecting nothing is, [nor] does something have real being in itself."[102] Neverthe-

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[96] *DM* 30.15.27 (vol. 26, 178): "Ab illo autem esse quod creaturae in Deo habent, denominantur cognitae, sed haec solum est *denominatio extrinseca* in illis solumque esse potest fundamentum alicuius relationis rationis" (emphases mine).

[97] Ibid.

[98] Cf. Thomas, *De ente et essentia*, c. 2.

[99] See *DM* 31.2.1 (vol. 26, 229): "Principio statuendum est, essentiam creaturae, seu creaturam de se, et prius quam a Deo fiat, nullum habere in se verum esse reale, et in hoc sensu, praeciso esse existentiae, essentiam non esse rem aliquam, *sed omnino esse nihil*" (my emphases).

[100] *DM* 31.2.1 (vol. 26, 229): "Hoc principium non solum verum est, sed etiam certum, secundum fidem."

[101] Cf. n. 27 supra.

[102] *DM* 31.2.3 (vol. 26, 230): "… solus Deus est ens ex se necessarium, et sine illo factum est nihil, et sine effectione ejus nihil est, aut aliquod esse reale in se habet."

less, the theological framework determining Suárez's project generates a new set of metaphysical challenges, and the solutions following from Avicenna's espousal of E3 are no longer available, for example, establishing truth-makers for eternal truths.

In the discussion that occurs in *DM* 31 Suárez both (1) defends his thesis that within creatures there is only a rational distinction (*distinctio rationalis*) between essence and existence—thereby rejecting the real and the modal distinctions of the Thomistic and Scotistic schools respectively[103]—and (2) disentangles the metaphysical consequences that emerge therefrom. As becomes immediately apparent in his metaphysical determinations, Suárez's fundamental reason for holding only a rational distinction stems from the fact that, as he sees it, both the real and modal distinctions inevitably assert E3 in some form and, thus, betray CM3. The implication here is that, to Suárez's mind, the Scotistic position, though on the right track, has not gone far enough to safeguard a creation metaphysics.

Suárez's thought about possibility develops in large part from the notion of *ens diminutum*. Among various medieval philosophers, *ens diminutum* has a special place in the metaphysical thought of Duns Scotus.[104] Armand Maurer's research has shown that the phrase '*ens diminutum*' derives from a medieval mistranslation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* 6, wherein the Greek term 'λοιπόν' ('remaining') is (mis)translated by the Arabic term 'nāquis' ('diminished'). When the mistranslated text was subsequently translated from Arabic into Latin, the term '*diminutum*' was used to capture the meaning of 'nāquis.'[105] Whatever philological interest there may be here, what is of philosophical significance is just what *ens diminutum* came to signify and thus how it affected the development of later medieval and post-medieval metaphysical thought. The passage (viz., *Metaphysics* 6) that gives rise to the mistranslation identifies three meanings of 'being': real being (i.e., being in the categories), accidental being (i.e., *ens per accidens*), and being as true.[106] Since the metaphysician is only concerned with real being, both *ens per accidens* and *verum ens* (being as true) are set aside as what "remain" (i.e., *ens diminutum*).[107] For many medieval thinkers, *ens diminutum* generally signified both *ens per accidens* and *verum ens* as they stood together in distinction from real being.[108] Scotus, however,

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[103] For a helpful discussion of the immediate historical circumstances in which Suárez found himself regarding the debate pertaining to the distinction between creaturely essence and existence see Piero di Vona, *Studi sulla Scolastica della Controriforma. L'esistenza e la sua distinzione metafisica dall'essenza* (Florence: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1968), c. 2.

[104] Armand Maurer, "*Ens Diminutum*: A Note on its Origin and Meaning," *Mediaeval Studies* (1950): 221.

[105] *DM* 31.2.3.

[106] Aristotle *Metaphysics* 6.2.1026a33.

[107] Ibid., 6.4.1027b33; Maurer, "*Ens Diminutum*," 216.

[108] See, e.g., Roger Bacon, *Quaestiones supra libros primae philosophiae Aristotelis*, lib. 6, ad obj (Oxford: Clarendoniano, 1930: 184): "Ad aliud dico, quod hec scientia [i.e., metaphysica] est certissima quantum ad alias partes entis de quibus determinat, tamen loquendo de illa [ens per accidens] quantum ad istam partem diminutissimam que est ens per accidens est incertitude in ista scientia,

leaving aside the consideration of *ens per accidens*, restricted *ens diminutum* exclusively to the signification of *verum ens*, which is the being that something has precisely as it is known or produced in the mind: the being of a thought-object.[109] But, insofar as Scotus identifies *ens diminutum* with being-known and given that being-known is an extrinsic relation, *ens diminutum* signifies nothing intrinsic or positive whatsoever in the known thing. Rather, *ens diminutum* denotes only a relation of reason or, what is the same, a second intention.[110] For Scotus, then, *ens diminutum* simply amounts to *esse intelligibile*[111] and does not constitute a form of E3 since the former is entirely a matter of extrinsic denomination whereas E3 enjoys its own reality intrinsically.[112]

Aware of Scotus's actual teaching with respect to *ens diminutum*, Suárez corrects the Thomists when they claim that Scotus deftly reintroduces E3 by attributing some kind of reality (*ens diminutum*) to essences prior to their creation. Suárez states his agreement with the Subtle Doctor on the point that "the essences of creatures, although they should be known by God from eternity, are nothing, nor do they have true, real being [*esse*], before they receive it efficiently through the free will of God."[113] Moreover, he points out that, ironically, it is the Thomists themselves who, given their commitment to a real distinction, actually espouse E3 by attributing a real, intrinsic being to creaturely essences prior to their creation on account of which the Thomists abandon CM3, even if they do not acknowledge the fact.[114]

As was generally understood by the majority of scholastics at the time—including Suárez—a real distinction is that which intervenes between a 'thing' and a 'thing' (*distinctio rei a re*) and thus renders a creature's essence and existence two distinct *res*.[115] Such a distinction is clearly at play in the metaphysics of Johannes Capreolus, the *Princeps Thomistarum*, who develops his account of the relationship between creaturely essence and existence in terms of the distinction that Henry

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nec propter hoc debet dici incerta, quia de aliis determinans est certa, et inocertissima.) Cf. Maurer, "*Ens Diminutum*," 217-18.

[109] See, e.g., Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 36, q. un., nn. 36, 44, 54.

[110] Maurer, "*Ens Diminutum*," 221.

[111] On this point, see Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens: Die formale Bestimmung der Seiendheit und Realität in der Metaphysik des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit (Duns Scotus-Suárez-Wolff-Kant-Peirce)* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1990), 39-42.

[112] This is not to suggest that Scotus's thinking on *esse intelligibile* and *ens diminutum* are entirely identical with Suárez's thoughts on the nature of unactualized essences and possibility. For differences between the two thinkers see Renemann, "Suárez's Doctrine on Concepts," 324-28. For Scotus's own understanding of the relation between *ens diminutum* and *esse intelligibile* see Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens*, 39-45. See also Di Vona, *Studi sulla Scolastica della Controriforma*, 51.

[113] *DM* 31.2.1 (vol. 26, 229): "… essentiae creaturarum, etiam si a Deo sint cognitae ab aeterno, nihil sunt, nullumque verum esse reale habent, antequam per liberam Dei efficientiam illud recipient."

[114] Ibid., 7.1.1.

[115] Whether Thomas Aquinas would recognize his own doctrine in what his successors advance is an entirely different question. The fact remains, however, that these were the Thomistic data informing Suárez's project. Given what we have thus far seen concerning Aquinas's view, Capreolus's explanation seems obviously dissonant with his Dominican predecessor.

of Ghent had established between *esse essentiae* and *esse existentiae*.[116] While God creates out of "existential nothing" (*ex nihilo existentiae*), Capreolus explains, God does not create out of "essential nothing" (*ex nihilo essentiae*).[117] The consequence of this claim is that creatures enjoy their *esse essentiae* from eternity and are only brought into actual existence when they receive a really distinct *esse existentiae* through God's creative act.[118] Nevertheless, insofar as *esse essentiae* is tantamount to Avicenna's E3, Capreolus's position would seem to be incongruous with CM3, for reasons we shall presently see.

Just as Scotus had subjected Henry's position to severe critique for its failure to accommodate the metaphysical exigencies of a creation *ex nihilo*,[119] so too does Suárez argue against Capreolus on similar grounds. The Jesuit tells us that that which has no existence (i.e., *esse essentiae*), is either (1) simply and entirely nothing or (2) it is not nothing; which is to say that it is something. Given Capreolus's concession that creatures have *esse essentiae*, which, as he admits, is not nothing, his position is not (1). If (2) is the case, then, absolutely speaking, God does not create *ex nihilo* for God creates out of something real: *esse essentiae* (i.e., E3). In short, like Henry of Ghent, Capreolus's account is consistent with the claim that God does not really create anything at all. The most that could be said is that God, like the *Timaeus*'s δημιουργός, produces things out of some real receptive, unproduced possibility (E3); but this is incompatible with CM3.[120] Suárez further warns that Capreolus's account allows creatures to "glory in themselves" since they have something through their own selves (viz., *esse essentiae*) that they do not receive from God![121]

Be that as it may, if, apart from existence, a creaturely essence is entirely nothing, what sense does it make to call an unactualized essence 'real'? Is it not the case that designating such essences as 'real' attributes to them what the term itself suggests, namely, some 'reality'? If such were the case, the unactualized Suárezian RE would seem to be just one more form of E3. Yet Suárez avoids embracing E3 by insisting that 'real' in this context is merely an extrinsic denomination. When he calls essences 'real' or 'possible' no *intrinsic* reality whatsoever is signified. Rather, following

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116 Capreolus, *Defensiones theologiae divi Thomae Aquinatis* (ed. C. Paban and T. Pègues; Turin, 1902), tomus III, lib. 2, d. 1, q. 2, a. 3: "Quia, sicut dicit Henricus, et bene, meo judico, essentia habet duplex esse, scilicet esse essentiae, et esse existentiae…." (76).

117 *DM* 31.2.4 (vol. 26, 230): "Neque aliquid juvat, quod Capreolus supra, ex aliorum sententia, respondet, Deum creasse omnia ex nihilo existentiae, non vero ex nihilo essentiae." Cf. Schmutz, "Réalistes, Nihilistes et Incompatibilistes," 138.

118 An important corollary to this distinction is that it establishes the basis for eternal truths (viz., *esse essentiae*) and possibility, despite the fact that the particular individuals instantiating essences only have temporal and contingent existence (*esse existentiae*).

119 Cf. nn. 59, 60 supra.

120 *DM* 31.2.4.

121 Ibid. (vol. 26, 230): "Under ulterius fit, creaturam posse quasi gloriari, quod ex se habeat aliquid quod non habet a Deo, nec participatum ab illo. Haec autem omnia et similia sunt contra fidem et naturalem rationem."

the Scotistic notion of *ens diminutum*, Suárez means that the reality or possibility that an unactualized RE enjoys is entirely *extrinsic* and consists in its relationship to God as a thought-object or as an object of divine power.[122] John P. Doyle gives a preliminary description of the Suárezian notion of extrinsic denomination; it is "a designation of something, not from anything inherent in itself, but from some disposition, coordination, or relationship which it has toward or with something else."[123] Doyle then lists some common examples of extrinsic denomination: the designation of something as to the left or right of a column, an object's being visible or audible with respect to a seer or hearer, or even an object as known with respect to a knower.[124] Put simply, an unactualized RE is not called 'real' because of anything *intrinsic* to it—as would be the case with E3—any more than a column is called 'to the left of' or 'to the right of' something on account of anything intrinsic to the column itself. Rather, a possible creature or, what is the same, an unactualized RE is 'real' only in the sense of being an object of God's power. This extrinsic character is captured precisely in Scotus's notion of *ens diminutum* which, as we saw, concerns the extrinsic relationship between a knower and the object known. With respect to possibility, then, to say that *x* is possible means that *x* has some extrinsic relationship to God, who has the power to create *x*. For that reason, Suárez is keen to elucidate just what is at stake in Scotus's theory of *ens diminutum* so that he can establish that possibility posits no intrinsic reality in an essence and remains a matter of extrinsic denomination.

Following Scotus's thinking on *ens diminutum* further, Suárez adds a caveat. In order for God to create something, the essence of that thing must of itself be non-repugnant, which is to say, it must involve no self-contradiction.[125] Does this suggest, as Norman Wells thinks, that Suárez is betraying his original insight by covertly introducing some intrinsic criterion—and thus reality—into uncreated essences?[126] Doyle also finds it problematic that Suárez's resolution of the nature of possibility turns upon non-contradiction, for the reason that the Jesuit seems to attribute some intrinsic being to an uncreated essence.[127] Given Suárez's opposition of RE to *entia rationis* (non-beings), Doyle complains that, for Suárez, possibles are not non-beings (i.e., *entia rationis*), which is to say, they are beings.[128] What is more, Suárez himself

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[122] Ibid., 31.2.2.

[123] John P. Doyle, "Prolegomena to a Study of Extrinsic Denomination," in Victor M. Salas, ed., *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548-1617)* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010), 125.

[124] Ibid.

[125] *DM* 31.2.2.

[126] See Wells, *Francis Suárez on the Essence of Finite Being as Such*, 24: "It is to this extent that Suárez fails to overcome the problems associated with a genuinely underived, intrinsic, pre-existential possibility in the case of creatures. … Suárez is saddled with an underived, intrinsic pre-existential possibility of a negative sort which is embodied in his doctrine of *non repugnance* and *essentia realis*."

[127] Doyle, "Suarez on the Reality of the Possibles," in Victor M. Salas, ed., *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548-1617)*, 33.

[128] Ibid., 39.

also describes unactualized essences as possessing "objective potential being." But if unactualized creatures enjoy some objective potential being, it would seem that they possess being at least in some fashion. Yet, if unactualized essences have any degree of being on their own, one cannot maintain, as does Suárez, that they are entirely nothing. Is Suárez's description of RE as that which is *apt* to exist simply a concession, then, to RE's own intrinsic metaphysical capacity to receive existence? Doyle is critical of Suárez precisely on that point: "If creatures are somehow real essences, of themselves apt to exist, why … should they require a creator?"[129]

4.1 The "Essentialism" of Essences?

As discussed in Chapter 2, a great deal of confusion concerning the putative reality of unactualized creaturely essences and the reduction of being to mere logical possibility has plagued many interpretations of Suárez. The dubious fruits of such interpretive trends are on full display when Pabst claims, as I quoted above, that for Suárez, "the reality of essences precedes the actuality of existence."[130] While others, such as Norman Wells[131] and John Doyle[132] offer much more subtle and sophisticated analyses of Suárez's accounts of being and possibility, their interpretations together with Pabst's converge upon the same conclusion, namely, that the Jesuit appropriates a version of E3 and thereby, much like Avicenna, attributes (non-existential) being to essence. I suggest, however, that Suárez's position is actually much more nuanced than these and similar interpreters suppose. As we have already seen from the foregoing chapters, the Suárezian metaphysics is concerned with being insofar as it is real being. But something is a real being or, what is the same, a real essence only on account of its existential aptitude.[133] Indeed, as Suárez sees it, "existence as existence corresponds to being as such, and is intrinsic to its nature [*ratione*], whether in potency, or in act, taken just as it is being."[134] There is no reduction of being to a non-existent possible essence or thought object. Such being the case, what

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[129] Doyle, "The Suarezian Proof for God's Existence," in *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548-1617)*, 119-20.

[130] Pabst, *Metaphysics*, 329.

[131] In addition to an English translation of the thirty-first disputation of the *Disputationes metaphysicae*, Wells has produced many scholarly articles devoted to the subject of Suárez on eternal truths. See, e.g., Wells, "Suarez on the Eternal Truths I and II," *The Modern Schoolman* 58 (1980): 73-104; (1981): 159-74.

[132] Doyle's most relevant work to the present topic would obviously be his "Suarez on the Reality of the Possibles," republished in his *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548-1617)*.

[133] *DM* 2.4.14. Sanz's account of Suárez's teaching on nominal being, described as the "banishing" (*desterrar*) of existence, strikes me as an exaggeration, though not necessarily ontological essentialism. But nevertheless a view of the Suárezian metaphysics as existentially neutral emerges, which, as I argued in the previous chapter, is far from the manner in which the Jesuit unfolds his account of *essentia realis*. See Sanz, *La teoría de la posibilidad en Francisco Suárez* (27): "Según lo visto hasta aquí, es preciso desterrar de la noción de ente como nombre la significación de la existencia o entidad actual."

[134] Ibid., 50.12.15 (vol. 265, 969): "… existentia, ut existentia correspondet enti ut sic, estque de intrinseca ratione ejus, vel in potentia, vel in actu, prout sumptum fuerit ens…."

then is the relationship between existence and possibility? Are the two coterminous or is one broader in extension than the other?

As noted above, for Suárez, 'possibility' can be taken in one of two senses. This twofold acceptation is presented in *DM* 42.3.9, where Suárez identifies possibility with 'potentiality' (*potentia*), which is itself an equivocal or analogical term. In one way, 'potency' is taken with respect to the possible "taken most broadly." In this sense, "the possible is whaever does not involve self-repugnance."[135] It is not the case, however, that possibility consists only in freedom from self-repugnance, for, as Suárez points out, there are two aspects to possibility: (A) one negative and (B) one positive. The negative aspect (A) consists in the aforementioned non-repugnance to being, which is commonly called 'logical possibility' (*possibile logicum*). Suárez goes on to note that 'logical potency' (*potentia logica*) corresponds to this sense of 'possibility' because it does not consist in some simple and real faculty (*in aliqua simplici et reali facultate*), but only in the non-repugnance of the extreme terms. For this reason, it pertains more to the order of thought or the intellect's composing and dividing terms in a proposition, rather than to real existence.[136] Suárez is clear on this last point when in another passage he states that logical possibility "posits no entity in reality" (*in re nihil entitatis ponat*).[137]

The second (B) aspect of possibility that Suárez identifies consists in a "positive denomination" (*positive denominatio*) that signifies the possible thing with respect to some real active or passive potency which involves more than just the consideration of logical possibility.[138] Here, what Suárez seems to have in mind is somewhat akin Thomas's own division of possibility into P1 or P2. That is, the possibility for wood's burning, for example, can be attributed to it on account of either (P1) its underlying material constitution (i.e., potency) or (P2) because of the power of some extrinsic agent (e.g., a burning coal) to ignite the wood. Here, unlike logical possibility, what is at issue is reality, namely, the reality of either some underlying potentiality or the reality of an agent.[139] With respect to unactualized creaturely essences, it cannot be the case that there actually exists any underlying potency, for, as we have seen, Suárez thinks that prior to its creation an unactualized creature is "entirely nothing." We should also recall from Suárez's *De divina substantia* that no real being

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[135] Ibid., 42.3.9 (vol. 26, 613): "… possibile quidquid in se repugnantiam non involvit…."

[136] Ibid. (vol. 26, 613): "… hoc dici solet possibile logicum, eique correspondet potentia logica, quae ita appellatur, quia non consistit in aliqua simplici et reali facultate, sed sola non repugnantia extremorum, et ita magis cernitur in ordine ad mentis compositionem ac divisionem, quae ad logicum spectat."

[137] Ibid., 43.4.2.

[138] Ibid., 42.3.9.

[139] Hurtado has something similar in mind when he marks a distinction between logical possibility and being in potency. See Hurtado, *Universa philosophia*, Metaph., disp. 2, sec. 1, n. 2 (Lyon, 1624: 729): "Adverte non esse idem, ens posse existere, & esse in potentia: primum enim tantum significat potentiam logicam, seu non repugnantiam existendi… at esse in potentia significat rem esse possibile, sed non actu existentem."

(*esse reale*) is attributed to a possible creature, which only *has esse cognitum*.[140] If a creature is a possible being only in virtue of its *esse cognitum* from which *ens reale* is excluded, then that which is possible, taken even in this positive aspect (B), cannot be identical with real being. The distinction between real being and the possible carries an important implication for the Suárezian metaphysics. If the proper object of metaphysics is *ens reale* and if *ens reale* is distinct from the possible taken in the latter sense (B), then metaphysics cannot be reduced to a study of mere *possibilia* whether in terms of (A) logical possibility or (B) in terms of some underlying potency. It can only be the case that some unactualized creaturely essence is possible in relation to God, who exists as an agent cause. In this regard, we see that even possibility itself is rooted in existence, that is, in the existence of God as a creator-cause.

With these distinctions in place, we can return to our previous question regarding the relationship between existence and possibility. Since logical possibility does not pertain to the actual existence of something, it is broader in extension than existence. Both really existent beings as well as that which does not exist can be called logically possible so long as they do not involve self-repugnance. Indeed, even God Himself, who though a necessary being,[141] can rightly be considered logically possible or, as Suárez puts it, necessarily existent according to 'logical potency' (*potentia logica*).[142] Later scholastics, such as Hurtado de Mendoza and Arriaga, for instance, are even more explicit about God's logical possibility.[143] The latter states that: "in the concept of being, namely, what can exist, I conceive equally God and creatures, and thereupon I conceive the Logical possibility to exist."[144] What is more, we might also say that logical possibility and real being differ not only in extension, but are also intensionally distinct. The former carries no existential import, whereas the latter cannot be understood without an *ordo ad esse*. Finally, we might consider that much earlier in his discussion of transcendental unity (*DM* 4.8), Suárez had already indicated that the division between infinite and finite being is the primary division of being.[145] That division is just the same as the division between necessary and contingent being,[146] the division between being *per essentiam* and being *per participationem*,[147] the division between uncreated and created being,[148] and finally the division of being into pure act and potency.[149] All these divisions, Suárez holds,

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140 See n. 83 supra.

141 *DM* 28.1.8.

142 Ibid., 28.1.15,

143 See Hurtado, *Universa philosophia*, Metaph., disp. 2, sec. 1, n. 2 (Lyon, 1624).

144 Arriaga, *Cursus philosophicus*, Metaph., disp. 2, sec. 1, subsec. 1, n. 7 (Lyon, 1669: 958): "… nam in conceptu entis, concipio aequaliter Deum & creaturas, & tunc concipio Logicam possibilitatem ad existendum…."

145 *DM* 4.8.1 (vol. 25, 137): "… prima divisio entis est illa in finitum et infinitum."

146 Ibid., 28.1.8.

147 Ibid., 28.1.13.

148 Ibid., 28.1.14.

149 Ibid., 28.1.15.

coincide in reality (*in re*).[150] That could hardly be said if 'possible being' were also included among the divisions of being that constitute the object of metaphysics.

Nonetheless, in maintaining that a real essence (RE) is that which is free from contradiction—which is to say, logically possible—could one argue that thinkability is still the chief criterion of being, which would just make being a function of the thinkable? Commenting on this issue of metaphysical emphasis, Sanz rightly observes that the fundamental question is whether possibility is a mode of being or if being is a determination of the possible.[151] While Courtine, Doyle, and Wells, as we know, come down on the side of the latter, I have argued that they do not accurately represent Suárez's doctrine. I readily concede that Suárez describes RE as free of internal contradiction,[152] but, as I have also pointed out,[153] freedom from contradiction is far from the totality of what constitutes RE which, Suárez insists, is no mere product of the intellect. In other words, thinkability does not "unproblematically" constitute being for Suárez, as John Milbank suggests.[154] The Jesuit, after all, is keenly aware of the difference between real being (as that which enjoys *essentia realis*) and beings of reason (which do not have an *essentia realis*). As we have already seen, Suárez distinguishes the two in terms of their relation—or lack thereof—to existence. That which has RE is 'apt' to exist; a being of reason has no such aptitude.

Nevertheless, 'aptitude' itself raises a question: how can something (i.e., RE) be apt to exist without itself being 'something'? Further still, how is that 'something' not just an intrinsic structure (as is the case with E3)? Suárez offers the outline of an answer to these questions in the midst of responding to a series of objections to his claim that, prior to its creation, a creature's essence is absolutely nothing. The objections all argue that creaturely essences must enjoy some sort of real and intrinsic being since: (1) they terminate God's cognition and so must be something; (2) the essential predicates of an essence are eternally true, but all truth is based on being; (3) created things have essential structures of themselves that are the same whether they are produced or not (e.g., an actually existing human and a possible human both fall under the same genus and species), and so must enjoy some essential being; (4) if there is no being to an essence prior to God's creation, a real essence will be the same as a being of reason; and (5) according to Thomas's threefold division of being (viz., essence, existence, and being as the truth of a proposition), essence enjoys its being from eternity.[155]

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[150] Ibid. 4.8.9 (vol. 25, 139): "… omnes enim hae divisiones in re coincidunt …."

[151] Sanz, *La teoría de la posibilidad en Francisco Suárez*, 13: "En el terreno de las modalidades de ser según el pensamiento del Eximio, no está de más preguntarse si es la posibilidad un modo de ser o, por el contrario, el ser una determinación de lo posible."

[152] *DM* 2.4.7.

[153] See ch. 3, p. 146 supra.

[154] Milbank, *The Word Made Strange: Theology, Language, Culture* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1997), 40-41.

[155] *DM* 31.2.6.

Each objection, we observe, challenges Suárez's claim that an uncreated essence is simply nothing. 'Nothing,' after all, cannot function as a cognitive terminus, an eternal truth-maker, a difference of real beings and *entia rationis*, etc.[156] In response, Suárez argues that what he calls 'potential being' is sufficient to overcome, in one way or another, each of the concerns that the objections raise and, crucially, that such being ascribes nothing real or intrinsic whatsoever to an uncreated essence. In short, potential being does not commit one to E3. Obviously, the nature of potential being and its distinction from real being will be critical in determining Suárez's full account of the nature of possibility.

4.2 Potential Being (i.e., Objective Potency)

Suárez makes clear that 'potential being' has nothing to do with passive potency or relative possibility (P1), for objective potency "asserts no real and positive potency which actually would be."[157] Moreover, objective potency is, as we shall presently see, just the same as possible being. The key to Suárez's account of potential being or objective potency is the qualifying term 'objective.' Calling a potency 'objective' simply places it in relation with some term, *x*, as the object of *x*. Once again, what Suárez has in mind is extrinsic denomination, for objective potency "does not posit any real and positive being in the thing, which is said to be in potency."[158] But if objective potency is nothing intrinsic to something, then Suárez will have achieved his goal, namely, the evacuation of all being from that which is uncreated, even that which is only possible. To establish that objective potency is of itself entirely nothing, he offers three arguments and an additional corroborating observation. Each of these arguments, moreover, presupposes and argues from the Christian faith-claim of a creation *ex nihilo*.

First, the objective potency of some essence is either something produced (a) or unproduced (b). If the latter (b) is the case, then it would be nothing distinct from the creator, for whatever is not produced by God either is God or is simply nothing.[159] It must be understood, then, that such an unproduced objective potency would just be a feature of the divine power itself. If, however, an objective potency is (a) produced, it would still follow that that potency is nothing positive or intrinsic to an uncreated essence for the following reason. Either that potency would be (a1)

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[156] As Schmutz shows in his "Réalistes, Nihilistes et Incompatibilistes" the issue of "negative truthmakers" is not a problem that vexed Suárez alone. Indeed, the problem continues to provoke responses from contemporary metaphysicians such as David Armstrong. See Armstrong, *Truth and Truthmakers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[157] *DM* 31.3.3 (vol. 26, 233): "… ergo hoc esse in potentia objective nullum dicit potentiam realem et positivam, quae actu sit."

[158] Ibid. (vol. 26, 233): "… esse in potentia, seu illa potentia objectiva non possit esse res aliqua vera et positiva in ipsa re, quae in potentia dicitur…." Cf. Di Vona, *Studi sulla Scolastica della Controriforma*, 52.

[159] Ibid., 31.2.3 (vol. 26, 230): "… quidquid a Deo factum non est, vel Deum esse, vel nihil esse…."

produced from eternity and of necessity or (a2) freely and in time. The former (a1) cannot be the case because of the theological tenet that God is a free, creator-cause. Suárez explains, "since from faith [it is known] that God does nothing of necessity *simpliciter*, nor from freedom of the will [*ab aeterno*]; thus from faith it is [also known] that God began to operate in time."[160] Accordingly, if objective potency is something produced, it could only be produced (a2) "freely and in time."[161] But, continues Suárez, before it was produced, it was in objective potency. That is to say, since the actuality of something follows upon its potentiality, it must be held that the essence's potentiality preceded its production as a condition for the very possibility of its being produced. Suárez denies, though, that that objective potentiality is anything intrinsic to the uncreated essence. Rather, the objectivity of the potentiality in question is constituted as an extrinsic relation to some power capable of producing the 'objective potency.' "Therefore," concludes Suárez, "this being in objective potency does not assert real and positive potency, which would actually be."[162]

Second, Suárez argues that objective potency cannot be intrinsically real and positive in the produced thing for the reason that such potency would either (i) remain in the produced thing after its production or it would (ii) not remain. If (ii) is the case, then how could such a putatively intrinsic real being be destroyed by the production or realization of an actual essence? But such a destruction or elimination would have to be conceded in order to account for the transition from the essence's potentiality to the real and positive actuality of its production. Further, if that potency is destroyed, how is there an identity between the antecedent possibility and subsequent reality? If (i) is the case and the objective potency remains after the thing's production, such a potency must not only be understood as 'objective' (i.e., extrinsically in relation to some external agent) but also as 'subjective.' By 'subjective' I take Suárez to mean a relative possibility (P1) or, more specifically, a passive potency (P1B). Clearly, if (i) is conceded, then CM3 is compromised since things would not be made from nothing, "but from a presupposed potency, just as a subject or matter, out of which a thing is made."[163] The Jesuit therefore concludes that objective potency is nothing real or intrinsic to an uncreated essence through which he avoids E3.

Third, Suárez reaffirms that since there is no reality whatsoever to an uncreated essence there cannot be any "real, positive potency" since real potency follows only upon real being.[164] That is to say, a condition for P1A or P1B is P2. For this reason, Suárez tells us that something is called 'possible' only because of an extrinsic

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[160] Ibid. (vol. 26, 230): "… cum de fide sit, Deum nihil agere necesario simpliciter; neque ex libera voluntate; sic enim de fide est, in tempore coepisse operari."

[161] Ibid., 31.3.3. (vol. 26, 233): "… vel libere, et in tempore…."

[162] Ibid. (vol. 26, 233): "… ergo hoc esse in potentia objectiva nullum dicit potentiam realem et positivam, quae actu sit."

[163] Ibid. (vol. 26, 233): "… sed ex praesupposita potentia, tanquam ex subjecto, vel materia ex qua fit res."

[164] Ibid.

"denomination either from some active or passive potency."[165] Suárez clarifies and shows that the objection confuses P1 with P2. But given that, as we saw above, P1 and its subdivisions (P1A and P1B) always presuppose something preexistent, even if P1A is at issue, the possible thing would still be referred to as 'possible' by means of extrinsic denomination and not by any intrinsic property. It is here that Suárez identifies non-contradiction on the part of an essence as a criterion of possibility. He says, "on the part of creatures therefore only non-repugnance is supposed."[166] It is important to note that this criterion placed on the "part of creatures" is a negation, namely, the denial of self-contradiction. So, while this criterion might be cast as intrinsic, it still posits no positive reality to an essence prior to its creation "since no reality in them [i.e., creatures before they are created] is required or can be supposed."[167] Nevertheless, the question remains, just what is at issue in non-repugnance? While non-contradiction was an important feature of Thomas Aquinas's doctrine of possibility, Suárez develops his own account in a markedly different manner.

Still, is it not the case that Suárez's appeal to freedom from non-contradiction undermines my thesis regarding the existential structure of being? Such a denial of non-contradiction would seem to give the upper hand to the logicalizing interpreters, such as Gilson, Doyle, and Courtine, who find Suárez's essentialism to be a product of the possible as "not-nothing." I contend that the proper response to this objection is that the double negation or denial of self-contradiction pertains not to Suárez's thinking regarding being but to possibility. These are two distinct considerations. I have already shown that, for Suárez, (real) being and possibility are not identical whether intensionally or extensionally. While a lack of contradiction and the divine power to create might be what constitutes some object as possible, those two conditions, while necessary, are not sufficient for being. God, being a necessary being, cannot be identified with possible being, and, while the divine essence is free from self-contradiction, there is no sense in which God can be caused or produced. Yet, God is a real being for the reason that God exists. The lowly squirrel ascending the maple tree planted in my backyard also has an essence that is just as much free from self-contradiction as the divine essence, yet neither the squirrel nor its sublime creator are beings merely because of that fact. They are both beings because they really exist, albeit in crucially different manners: God exists *a se* and the squirrel exists *ab alio*. Thus, while possibility does not require existence in order to be possible, being cannot be being without some existential reference.

I shall return to Suárez's account of how non-contradiction is involved in the modal character of possibility momentarily. For the time being, we see that when Suárez attributes 'potential being' or, what is the same, 'objective potency' to an

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165 Ibid. (vol. 26, 233): "… per denominationem ab aliqua potentia activa, passive…."

166 Ibid. (vol. 26, 233): "Ex parte igitur creaturarum solum supponitur non repugnantia…."

167 Ibid. (vol. 26, 233): "… quia nihil rei in eis require aut supponi potest."

uncreated essence, he has no intention of conceding E3. As he puts it: "being in objective potency, is nothing other than being able to be an object of some power, or, more preferably, of the action or causality of some power."[168] To claim that the 'objective' in 'objective potency' signifies something intrinsic would require the object to precede itself in order to be an object of itself. Yet, as nothing can precede or produce itself, nothing can be its own object in the sense of being an object of its own self-causal act. For Suárez, then, 'objectivity' just denotes a relation between a cause and its potential object. Moreover, that potentiality signifies, as we have seen, "a negation, namely, that it has not yet actually proceeded from such a [causal] power."[169] What is at issue is entirely a matter of extrinsic denomination.

Suárez further emphasizes the extrinsic character of possibility when he tells us that the relationship between being in act and being in potency (i.e., objective potency) is just the same as the relationship between being and non-being. Being in act is not understood as the further addition of being (*esse*) to some intrinsic reality that an uncreated essence enjoys,[170] for "an essence in potency has nothing of entity."[171] Jorge Secada helpfully explains, "[F]or, though on its own nothing in reality, potential essence [i.e., objective potency] in a sense exists within what could cause it."[172] But to exist in the power of the cause is just to be of the very being of the cause itself. That is to say, possible essences exist only objectively in the divine mind.[173] In itself or intrinsically, objective potency is just nothing.[174]

4.3 *Futuribilia*

Another question regarding the entitative status of possibility emerges from Suárez's notion of future contingents: *futuribilia*. This issue arises as Suárez wrestles with the controversial topics of divine foreknowledge, grace, predestination, and human freedom. My interest here is not to wade into that fray, which has spawned volumes of debate and discussion,[175] but rather simply to consider the metaphysical implications of one of the tools Suárez uses to defend his theological position—namely, divine middle knowledge, which is God's knowledge of future contingents.

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[168] Ibid., 31.3.4 (vol. 26, 234): "… esse in potentia objectiva, nihil aliud est quam posse objici alicui potentiae, vel potius actioni aut causalitati alicujus potentiae…."

[169] Ibid. (vol. 26, 234): "… includere negationem, scilicet, quod nondum actu prodierit a tali potentia…."

[170] Ibid., 31.3.8.

[171] Ibid., 31.3.5 (vol. 26, 234): "… essentiam in potentia nihil habere entitatis…."

[172] Secada, *Cartesian Metaphysics: The Scholastic Origins of Modern Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 223.

[173] *DM* 31.2.10; cf. Secada, *Cartesian Metaphysics*, 228.

[174] Sanz, *La teoría de las posibilidades en Francisco Suárez*, 50-53.

[175] For an extensive treatment of the interrelation of these matters especially as they relate to Suárez, see William Lane Craig, *The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge: From Aristotle to Suárez* (Leiden: Brill, 1988).

As I mentioned in the introduction to the present Chapter, middle knowledge is God's knowledge of how free moral agents would act in a given set of circumstances. It is called 'middle' because it falls between God's pre-volitional and post-volitional knowledge.[176] This may be understood as follows. Through divine middle knowledge, God knows that, given a certain contingent set of circumstances (*x*), Peter would carry out a certain action (*a*). Also through middle knowledge, God knows that, given a different set of circumstances (*y*), Peter would carry out a different act (*b*). The situation can be presented hypothetically. If *x*, then *a*; if *y*, then *b*. Through pre-volitional knowledge, God knows the antecedents (*x* and *y*). By means of His middle knowledge, God knows the consequents (*a* and *b*). Finally, through post-volitional knowledge, God knows the world He has created in which whatever set of circumstances (*x*, *y*, or some other) that God has actually chosen to obtain. Within the economy of grace and human freedom, middle knowledge allows God to know whether or not in light of a certain state of affairs (*x*, *y*, *z*, etc.) a moral agent would cooperate with some supplied grace and thus carry out a certain meritorious act.

Yet, it seems that middle knowledge presents a difficulty for the Suárezian metaphysics. Insofar as future contingents are known eternally but without reference to any existential actualization, is it not the case that some intrinsic reality must be attributed to them? Future contingents, precisely as such, are not existent but are they not still something (i.e., E3)? As Doyle suggests, a negative and a negative (not nothing) would certainly seem to make a positive (a real something).[177] Suárez himself sums up the problem as follows: "since nothing is before it exists, it is not apparent how it can be of itself and in itself visible [i.e., knowable to God], or by what reason that is a true judgment of the future from eternity, or in what way this truth is, since it is nothing real."[178]

Here, we already see that, in the framing of the problem, Suárez does not concede any non-existential reality to *futuribilia*. Rather, he denies that they have any reality or being whatsoever, which is consistent with his general account of *possibilia*. Suárez defends his claim that future contingents have no intrinsic reality, whether existential or essential (E3), when he considers what is involved in their being merely objects of God's knowledge. There is a twofold condition (*habitudo*) in an object, namely, (1) its principle and (2) its terminus. By 'principle' here I take Suárez to mean what causes or brings about the object. With respect to the first, Suárez insists that there is no being (*entitatem*) for which one should search on the part of the object since, unlike human cognition which is actualized by the reality of its object, divine

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176 God does not exist in time, and so to speak of pre- and post-volitional knowledge is to appeal to logical priority. On this point, see Alfred Freddoso, *Luis de Molina*, 3.

177 Doyle, "Suarez on the Reality of the Possibles," 33.

178 *De scientia Dei futurorum contingentium*, lib. 1, c. 8, n. 4 (vol. 11, 328): "… quia cum nihil sit antequam existat, non apparet quomodo possit esse ex se et in se visibile, aut quomodo ratione illius sit ab aeterno vera enunciatio de futuro, aut quaenam sit haec veritas, cum nihil reale sit."

cognition does not stem from some distinct object.[179] Rather, divine cognition is itself the principle of the object as the object's cause. Likewise, to be the terminus of God's cognition does not require that an object—the future contingent—have any intrinsic reality. As was the case with a possible, a future contingent is just a matter of extrinsic denomination. "Whence [if] the knowledge, of itself, otherwise has sufficient power infallibly to attain such an object, it can be terminated by [the object], although there is no actual being [*actualis entitas*] or existence in [the object] through which it terminates such a [cognitive] act."[180] The situation concerning future contingents is just the same as that which pertains to *possibilia*, which terminate God's cognition even without any intrinsic being.[181] What is more, as we saw to be the case with possibility in general, objectively the truth of a future contingent consists only in a kind of aptitude involving non-repugnance, such that it can be understood by an intellect with sufficient power (i.e., God's intellect).[182]

For Suárez, then, *futuribilia* only have the being that an effect has in a cause, "which alone is the foundation of future existence [*esse*]."[183] Again, this is just a matter of extrinsic denomination. Despite being located within the thorny context of divine foreknowledge, grace, and human freedom, future contingents are reduced to Suárez's broader conception of possibility itself. The only difference is that *futuribilia* function as possibles within a specifically theological context involving free moral agents; the metaphysical situation is entirely the same. As possibles have neither existence nor any degree of reality, neither do *futuribilia*. Despite turning to middle knowledge as a means of reconciling human freedom and grace, no shadowy being or E3 thereby seeps back into Suárez's notion of being. It remains existentially oriented.

5. Suárez on the Modal Character of Possibility

Though Suárez's reduction of possibility to extrinsic denomination vis-à-vis the divine power safeguards the theologian's commitment to CM3, unfortunately, it seems to have the disastrous consequence of destroying science. A science, as Aristotle construes it, only concerns that which is necessary and universal. Individual creatures are particular and the existence they enjoy, though realized according to

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179 Ibid., n. 6.

180 Ibid. (vol. 11, 329): "Unde se alioqui scientia ipsa ex se habeat sufficientem vim attingendi infallibiliter tale objectum, potest terminari ad illud, etiamsi in illo nulla sit actualis entitas, seu existentiam per quam terminet talem actum."

181 Ibid. (vol. 11, 329): "Item de re possibili, de qua supra diximus, terminare etiam cognitionem seu scientiam, cum tamen secundum eum statum non habeat in se propriam et actualem entitatem, sed in causa."

182 Ibid. (vol. 11, 329): "Ex parte vero objectorum, nihil alliud est haec veritas quam aptitudo quaedam, seu non repugnantia, ut intellectus habens virtutem intelligendi sufficientem, possit de tali objecto vere enunciare, seu judicare, quae aptitudo realiter non est aliud praeter ipsum esse…."

183 *De gratia*, prolegomenon 2, c. 7, n. 8 (vol. 7, 88): "Quocirca esse quod effectus habet in causa, solum est fundamentum futuri esse…."

certain essential structures, is contingent and temporal. If existence is removed from a creature, its essence falls into oblivion and cannot serve as a ground for eternal and necessary truths (e.g., 'a human being is an animal' or 'rust is iron oxide'). Suárez neatly sums up the dilemma: "if existence is withdrawn, essence is nothing, therefore neither is substance, nor accident, and consequently neither is body, nor soul, nor any other such thing; therefore no essential attribute is rightly able to be predicated of it."[184] In short, the question is: how can an Aristotelian science be preserved without some form of E3?

One might expect Suárez to employ the same tactic here that he used against Avicenna's notion of essential being and simply reject eternal and necessary truths. This was the approach Francisco Zumel and Michael de Palacios took.[185] They held that propositions regarding creatures only come to be true as creatures come to exist and cease to be true once creatures cease to be.[186] Nevertheless, Suárez, aligning himself with several Church Fathers, especially Augustine, rejects the idea that there are no eternally necessary truths.[187]

If not a function of creaturely essences (which have no eternal being), are eternal truths grounded somehow in the divine being? That had been the opinion of Thomas Aquinas, who held that eternal, necessary truths have their truth and therefore their being in the divine intellect.[188] Amazingly, Suárez rejects this claim and herein a crucial difference between the Jesuit and his Dominican predecessor emerges. Suárez's reason for rejecting Thomas's claim is that not only are necessary truths in the divine intellect (e.g., 'a human being is an animal'), so too are contingent truths (e.g., 'Socrates is snub-nosed'). But if to be an eternal necessary truth were just to be in the divine intellect, then all truths—contingent ones included—would be eternal and necessary, which is absurd. Eternally necessary truths are not "true because they are known by God, but rather they are known because they are true, otherwise it would not be possible to render a reason why God would necessarily know them to be true."[189] What is at issue here is not so much the entitative status of possibility, which remains a matter of extrinsic denomination, but the modal character of possibility. For Suárez, the necessity of such truths cannot emerge from the divine will's election. (Later this would place him into fundamental disa-

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[184] *DM* 31.12.38 (vol. 26, 294): "… Si, ablata existentia, … essentia nihil est, ergo nec est substantia, neque accidens, et consequenter neque corpus, neque anima, neque alia hujus modi; ergo nullum essentiale attributum potest de illa jure praedicari." Cf. E.M. Curley, "Descartes on the Creation of Eternal Truths," *The Philosophical Review* 93 (1984): 585.

[185] Wells, *Francis Suárez on the Essence of Finite Being as Such*, 210, n. 108.

[186] *DM* 31.12.29.

[187] Ibid.

[188] Cf. Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 10, a. 3, ad 3; ibid., I, q. 16, a. 17, ad 1; *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 5, ad 11.

[189] *DM* 31.12.40 (vol. 26, 295): "Rursus neque illae enuntiationes sunt verae quia cognoscuntur a Deo, sed potius ideo cognoscuntur quia verae sunt, alio qui nulla reddi posset ratio, cur Deus necessario cognosceret illas esse vera…."

greement with Descartes.[190]) If eternal truths depended upon divine volition, they would not be necessary of themselves.[191] Moreover, Suárez, like Thomas before him, marks a distinction between the divine speculative intellect and the divine operative intellect. While the latter knows things as they actually exist (e.g., Mars actually has two orbiting satellites, Phobos and Deimos), the former merely considers the truth of its object—it does not make that object actually to be. For example, God could speculatively consider the necessary predicates that pertain to the essence of a twin sibling of an only child or of the essential structure of a gold mountain without actually bringing the twin or the mountain into being. Suárez concludes, "therefore enunciations of this kind, which are said to be in the first, and indeed also are in the second mode of per se predication, have perpetual truth, not only as they are in the divine intellect, but also in themselves, and prescinding from it."[192]

Suárez's thesis may well seem counterintuitive from a Christian perspective since it suggests that eternal truths are, in a sense, independent of God. This seems outrageous *prima facie* for the Christian theologian since, as Aristotle himself points out, truth depends upon being: "From the fact that something is or is not, a proposition is true or false."[193] Suárez's thesis would seem to imply that there is some being serving as a truth-maker, which is independent of God. Yet, as we have seen, in order to maintain CM3 while developing his account of possibility, Suárez consistently rejects the claim that there is any co-eternal reality alongside God. Moreover, Suárez posits a real identity between a creature's essence and existence to avoid E3 in the first place. To suggest, then, that eternal truths are true in themselves seems to betray every conviction and metaphysical thesis that Suárez has thus far defended.

Nevertheless, as Jorge Secada explains, the present dilemma stems from "confus[ing] an existential with a definitional predication."[194] That is, for Suárez, the copula 'is' (*est*) functions in a twofold manner.[195] On the one hand, 'is' can indicate a connection between two real terms pertaining to an existing thing; "when it is said '*man is an animal*,' the thing itself is signified thus to be."[196] On the other hand, 'is' can also indicate that a certain predicate pertains to the nature of the subject term, whether that term is existent or not.[197] The first sense of 'is' corresponds to the Aristotelian claim made above about truth following from the being of something. Suárez himself points out that truth depends precisely upon the existence

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190 Curley, "Descartes on the Creation of Eternal Truths," 586-88.

191 *DM* 31.12.40.

192 Ibid. (vol. 26, 295): "… igitur hujus modi enunciationes, quae dicuntur esse in primo, imo etiam quae sunt in secundo modo dicendi per se, habent perpetuam veritatem, non solum ut sunt in divino intellectu, sed etiam secundum se, ac praescindendo ab illo."

193 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 4.7.1011b26-28.

194 Secada, *Cartesian Metaphysics*, 227.

195 *DM* 31.12.44.

196 Ibid. (vol. 26, 296): "… cum dicitur, *homo est animal*, significetur reipsa ita esse."

197 Ibid.

of the terms involved such that what is indicated is a "real and actual duration."[198] To say, for example, that 'Socrates is an animal' in the first sense of 'is,' is true only if Socrates actually exists and indeed only so long as he exists. What is more, the truth of such propositions depends upon the actual existence of its terms, and, insofar as the terms are contingent, their truth has an efficient cause (God) that sustains the being signified by the terms of the proposition.[199] According to the first sense of 'is,' then, a metaphysical reality is indicated, which serves as a truth-maker for its corresponding propositions. In this way, since what is under discussion is contingent, dependent being, then of course Suárez readily admits that such truth is entirely dependent upon God just as all being is dependent upon God.

Taken in the second sense, the conditions for a proposition's truth do not depend upon existence, which is the same as saying they do not have a relation to God as an efficient cause.[200] But if propositions are true without a relation to some real being, what serves as their truth-makers? Suárez answers that they are determined by hypothetical or conditional relations. "For when we say that a man is an animal, abstracting from time, we say nothing other than [the fact that] this nature of man cannot be brought about without being an animal. Whence, just as this conditional is eternal, 'If it is a human being, it is an animal,' or, 'If it runs, it moves,' thus these [propositions] are eternal, 'Man is an animal,' or 'Running is motion.'"[201] In reducing necessary and eternal truths to hypothetical or conditional propositions, Suárez relativizes them to God, which means that God alone is metaphysically necessary. While there might be a (modally) necessary connection between the terms of an eternal truth, that necessity remains *metaphysically* conditional. The necessity of eternal truths, then, is of a non-ontological order since creatures need not exist. But *if* they do, then there are (hypothetically) necessary features of created beings on account of which there can be science without introducing E3.

Nevertheless, Suárez confronts a difficulty regarding these necessary truths vis-à-vis possibility. James Ross argues that possibility cannot be a function of conceivability or thinkability. Yet, in grounding eternal truths upon formal identities and relations of thought, anything conceivable—including fictions—would seem to be possible. Suárez himself acknowledges this dilemma: "For this conditional is equally true, 'If a stone is an animal, it is able to sense, and that, 'If a man is an animal, he is able to sense.'"[202] What is more, given Suárez's earlier reduction of

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198 Ibid. (vol. 26, 296): "… significat realem et actualem durationem…."

199 Ibid.

200 Suárez is not unique in this claim. See Schmutz, "Bartolomeo Mastri et la mouche," 484.

201 *DM* 31.12.45 (vol. 26, 297): "… cum enim dicimus hominem esse animal, abstrahendo a tempore, nihil aliud dicimus, nisi hanc esse hominis naturam, ut non possit fieri homo quin sit animal. Unde, sicut haec conditionalis est perpetua, *Si homo, est animal*, vel, *Si curri, movetur*, ita haec est perpetua, *Homo est animal*, vel, *Cursus est motus*."

202 Ibid. (vol. 26, 297): "… aeque enim vera est haec conditonalis, *Si lapis est animal, est sensibilis* [sic.], ac ista, *Si homo est animal, est sensibilis*."

conditional statements to their indicative mood with the propositions 'man is an animal' and 'running is motion,' it seems one could accomplish the same and yield the necessarily true proposition 'the stone is a sentient being.' The claim that such a proposition is an eternal and necessary truth seems absurd since it is impossible for a stone to be sentient. This, however, is just question-begging since one could still ask: *why* is it impossible for a stone to be sentient?

Earlier we saw that, for Suárez, possibility is an extrinsic denomination of some object relative to the divine power. As God is both omniscient and omnipotent, the impossibility of a stone's being sentient, for example, cannot be a defect or limitation on the part of divine cognition or volition. Rather, it concerns the negative criterion Suárez identified earlier: non-repugnance. Non-repugnance serves as the distinction between those conditional propositions that are necessarily true and possible, as opposed to those that are not. Yet, non-repugnance here does not function in the same way that it did for Thomas since it does not pertain to a possible thing's imitation of the divine essence. Non-contradiction for the Jesuit pertains instead to the intrinsic relation that an eternal truth has to itself. "Nevertheless, in this we are able to assign a difference between necessary connections, conceived and judged between possible things or real essences, and between fictitious things or beings of reason, that in [the former] the connection is necessary according to an intrinsic relation among the terms abstracting from actual existence, so it would still be possible in an order to actual existence."[203] The reason why the proposition 'man is an animal' is *necessary* is because of the hypothetical relationship between the terms, which relationship has no efficient cause but depends solely on the formal identity of the terms involved. The reason why it is *possible* in the sense of being-possible is because there is a cause (God) capable of effecting the existence of the terms.[204] Suárez shares Scotus's view that the modal character of possibility emerges as a consequence of uncreated essences' eidetic characters. The Jesuit, however, emphasizes that possibility is an extrinsic denomination relative to God's power. God is the cause of possible being insofar (1) as the formal or eidetic characters constituting hypothetical relations are objectively present in the divine mind as God's thought-objects and (2) insofar as God has the power to realize what He can think without contradiction.

Ultimately, for Suárez as for Duns Scotus, "the truth of such enunciations depends on a cause capable of effecting the existence of the terms."[205] It is difficult to reconcile Suárez's account, as presented here, with Doyle's claim that "if these

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[203] Ibid. (vol. 26, 297): "Quamquam in hoc possimus discrimen assignare inter connexiones necessarias, conceptas et enunciatas inter res possibiles seu essentias reales, et inter res fictitias vel entia rationis, quod in illis ita est connexio necessaria secundum intrinsecam habitudinem extremorum abstrahentium ab actuali existentia, ut tamen sit possibilis in ordine ad actualem existentiam…."

[204] Ibid.

[205] Ibid., 31.12.45 (vol. 26, 297): "… et quoad hoc pendet veritas tantum enuntiationum a causa potente efficere existentiam extremorum."

non-repugnant possibles were not in themselves what they are, then there would be not only no divine Word but also no divine omnipotence, no divine science, and even no God."[206] Edwin Curley, on my view, seems to have the more accurate reading of Suárez: "[T]here is nothing in Suarez which says that the eternal truths are true independently of God."[207] What is more, as Secada notes, Suárez's claims about possibles being true apart from God "incorporate an implicit *per impossibile* qualification."[208] That is: "[Possibles] do not imply any ontological dependence or posteriority on the part of God; for they express only the ultimate modal structure of all being and reality, a structure which is founded in God, the only necessary substance."[209] Again, we must bear in mind that possibility cannot be construed in the fashion of something intrinsic to the creature, for that possibility is entirely objective or, what is the same, extrinsic. As beings of reason involve a formal contradiction (e.g., in the case of the 'sensing stone,' which is the contradiction 'inanimate animate being'), they are not possible. Thus Suárez holds: "But in the case of fictional beings, the necessary connections only come to be without a relationship, even with regard to the possible, to existing but merely with a relation to the imagination or fiction of the mind."[210]

Yet, might one still question whether Suárez's account runs afoul of James Ross's argument, namely, that conceivability cannot be the criterion of possibility since the knower is not always aware of the "*de re* overflow conditions" pertaining to what is possible?[211] Ross thinks conceivability is an insufficient basis for possibility because "Consistency is context bound, not free-floating."[212] That is to say, conceivability—and the concepts and judgments flowing therefrom—is metaphysically subsequent to the reality in question and cannot thereby serve as a determination of being. Early human beings, for example, might not have been able to *conceive* of the molecular structure of water because they did not have an understanding of the atomic and chemical structures that constitute water. As Ross puts it, one may not know the "overflow *de re* conditions" of something's possibility. Nevertheless, that two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen should combine to form water is *possible* in itself even if not conceivable. Ross's point is that, at times, the *de re* overflow conditions are "cognitively inaccessible" yet nevertheless constitutive of something's possibility.[213] While Ross's argument is persuasive with respect to human cognition,

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206 Doyle, "Suarez on the Reality of the Possibles," 37.

207 Curley, "Descartes on the Creation of Eternal Truths," 586.

208 Secada, *Cartesian Metaphysics*, 302, n. 37.

209 Ibid.

210 *DM* 31.12.45 (vol. 26, 297): "At vero in entibus fictitiis, solum fiunt connexiones necessariae sine habitudine, etiam de possibilis, ad existendum, sed solum per ordinem et imaginationem, seu fictionem mentis."

211 Ross, "Mere Metaphysical Possibility," in, ed. Gregory Doolan, *The Science of Being as Being: Metaphysical Investigations* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 2011), 159-63.

212 Ibid., 158.

213 Ibid., 159-63.

an infinite, omniscient intellect, Suárez could argue in response, is such that it can exhaustively comprehend all essences *without* any overflow remainders. God, and God alone, is such an intellect and would thus be capable of cognizing what is or is not compatible or contradictory with any given nature.

6. Conclusion

From what we have seen in the present chapter the principle challenge for the Christian theologian is fidelity to CM3 and the consistent rejection of E3. Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and Suárez, to name only a few, were well aware that they had to satisfy the demands of an Aristotelian science that considers universal and necessary truths without positing E3. Thomas's success in that regard was rather dubious since, in turning to imitability, the shadowy being of a relative terminus seems to have been planted and would eventually blossom—no doubt much to Thomas's great chagrin—to full maturity in Henry of Ghent's notion of *esse essentiae*. Whether on his own terms or those in which his thought metastasized, it is difficult to see how Thomas coherently avoids E3 and preserves CM3.

Suárez too was equally committed to remaining faithful both to his theological commitments and to the demands of what constitute an Aristotelian science. As we have seen, what is possible, in Suárez's view, has absolutely no being whatsoever within its own intrinsic constitution and is entirely a matter of extrinsic denomination relative to God. Suárez grounds the necessity of eternal truths that correspond to unactualized possibilities not in an imitative relationship to God, but within the hypothetical necessities that creaturely essences imply as God thinks them. There is for Suárez a distinction between (formal) necessity, on the one hand, and (metaphysical) possibility, on the other. While creatures enjoy a necessity unto themselves just as their natures have a proper *ratio* unto themselves, that necessity does not enjoy any metaphysical reality. What is more, even that formal necessity is simply a feature of God's speculative thought, which, infinitely expansive in itself, knows all that is in some way intelligible.

If interpreters such as Gilson, Courtine, Milbank, and Pabst, to name a few, view the Suárezian universe as populated with *possibilia* that lack existence but leave their mark upon reality, it is because they fail to grasp the authentic Suárezian doctrine of being itself. Suárez's account of possibility is consistent with his broader doctrine of being, which, as I have suggested, is established in terms of existence. Suárez remains, as we have seen, fundamentally committed to a creation metaphysics. As such, all being, without remainder, depends on God. Suárez's creation-metaphysics is simply an expression of his deeply held theological convictions that, as Colossians 1:16–17 puts it, "*omnia per ipso et in ipso creata sunt et ipse est ante omnes et omnia in ipso constant*."

Chapter Five

Being and Analogy

Suárez's existential doctrine of being, which unfolds in terms of immanent transcendence, entails an important metaphysical consequence that is often misconstrued by his interpreters—namely, being's analogical character. As we have seen, not only does Suárez's thesis of immanent transcendence place him at odds with Duns Scotus's transcendental theory, so too does it render impossible accepting the claim that the concept of being is univocal.[1] Nevertheless, numerous interpreters regard Suárez's doctrine of analogy as a thinly disguised form of Scotistic univocity. Olivier Boulnois, for instance, thinks that, for Suárez, being is "univocal to all objects, [and] in particular to the infinite and the finite."[2] Despite the fact that Suárez explicitly defends the *analogia entis*,[3] Boulnois follows Jean-François Courtine's lead and, while allowing for some "regional" differences, holds that there is a fundamental structural agreement between Scotus and Suárez. This can be seen from the fact that both regard being as the primary object of the intellect. That object, says Boulnois, "exceeds" (*dépasse*) being in act (i.e., existence) and consists in "indifference or the non-contradiction of essence."[4] To say that the primary object of the intellect exceeds being in act simply means that the "indifference" ascribed to being, much as is the case with Avicenna's teaching on essence, is with respect to existence. As Boulnois puts it, "The unity of *ens reale* depends solely on the logical coherence of intellection."[5] Being, construed in terms of such "indifference," enjoys the same univocal character as a logical concept.

Boulnois is not unique in his interpretation that reads univocity into Suárezian analogy.[6] Ludger Honnefelder, well known for his important contributions to the Scotus-*Forschung*, also maintains that, though "the use of the Scotistic language

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[1] Piero di Vona has drawn attention to how the transcendent character of being not only informs Suárez's commitment to analogy but influences other Jesuits (such as Pedro Hurtado de Mendoza). See Di Vona, *Studi sull'ontologia di Spinoza. Parte II. "Res" ed "ens". La necessità. Le divisioni dell'essere* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1969), 22, 52.

[2] Boulnois, *Être et représentation: Une généalogie de la métaphysique moderne à l'époque de Duns Scot (XIIIe-XIVe)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999), 479: "L'être est inclus dans cette représentation, et univoque à tous les objets, en particulier à l'infini et au fini."

[3] See *DM* 28.3 and 32.2, respectively, for the analogy between God and creatures and between substance and accident.

[4] Boulnois, *Être et représentation*, 482-89, quote at 482: "La possibilité objective qui le constitue se fonde sur l'indifference ou la non-contradiction de l'essence…." Cf. Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1990), 533.

[5] Ibid., 483: "… l'unité de l'*ens reale* dépend de la seule cohérence logique de l'intellection."

[6] See Walter Hoeres, "Francis Suarez and the Teaching of John Duns Scotus on univocatio entis," in R.M. Bonansea, ed., *John Duns Scotus, 1265-1965* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1965), 263-90; Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 521-38; Philipp Rosemann, *Understanding Scholasticism with Foucault* (NY, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 1999), 174-76.

has not established itself" in the Suárezian doctrine, nevertheless Suárez sides with Scotus in emphasizing the *unity* of the concept of being.[7] As such, the differences between Scotus and Suárez are much less significant than are their fundamental points of agreement.[8] When considering that Suárezian analogy consists in the ordered descent of being (*ens*) to its *inferiora*, Honnefelder cries foul. How can that which is absolutely simple and indifferent to differentiation or determination suddenly, through itself, be cast in terms of what is prior (God/substance) and what is posterior (creature/accidents)? While Suárez may insist upon analogy, he seems unable to do so without contradiction.[9]

In a similar vein, Jean-Luc Marion—himself no fan of Scotistic univocity—interprets Suárez's defense of conceptual unity as one moment in the steady "march towards univocity" that characterizes much of early modern thought. Also like Honnefelder and Boulnois, Marion thinks that, while Suárez "nominally rejects" univocity, he nevertheless accepts its foundational principles and does not fundamentally differ from Duns Scotus in that regard.[10] While Suárez may not have been the originator of univocal thinking, he passes the baton to his metaphysical successors both religious and secular.

Suárez himself seems to lend credence to the aforementioned interpretations when he states in an infamous passage, "if one of the two [i.e., the unity of the concept of being or analogy] would be denied, much more preferably should analogy, which is uncertain, be denied than the unity of the concept, which is seen to be demonstrated by certain reasoning."[11] With such a passage in mind, interpreters such as Walter Hoeres and John P. Doyle, who appreciate that Suárez himself at least intended to argue for analogy, think that, regrettably, the Suárezian doctrine of analogy simply dissipates into self-contradiction.[12] Yet, as José Pereira points out,[13] immediately after appearing to defend unity at the cost of analogy, we find a counterbalancing claim: "In true reality, however, it is not necessary to deny either,

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[7] Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens: Die formale Bestimmung der Seiendheit und Realität in der Metaphysik des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit (Duns Scotus-Suárez-Wolff-Kant-Peirce)* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1990): 290-91: "Offensichtlich hat sich der scotische Sprachgebrauch nicht durchsetzen können. Mit der Widerspruch begründenden Einheit des Begriffs wird die Sache selbst jedoch festgehalten."

[8] Ibid., 290.

[9] Ibid., 291.

[10] Jean-Luc Marion, *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes: analogie, création des vérités éternelles et fondement* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1991), 80, 102.

[11] *DM* 2.2.36 (vol. 25, 81): "… si alterum negandum esset, potius analogia, quae incerta est, quam unitas conceptus, quae certis rationibus videtur demonstrari, esset neganda."

[12] See John P. Doyle, "Suárez on the Analogy of Being," *The Modern Schoolman* 46 (1969): 219-49; 323-41; reprinted in *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548-1617)*, ed. Victor M. Salas (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010), c. 3. Henceforth, all citations of Doyle's article on analogy will be to his *Collected Studies* volume. For Hoeres see "Francis Suarez and the Teaching of John Duns Scotus on *Univocatio Entis*," 263-90.

[13] Pereira, *Suárez: Between Scholasticism and Modernity* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2007), 134.

since for univocity it does not suffice that a concept in itself be one in some mode, but it is necessary that it respect an equal relation and order to many, which the concept of being does not have."[14] Often those who seek to reconstruct Suárez's account in terms of univocity overlook this qualifying remark with deleterious consequences for the soundness of their interpretations.

Be that as it may, we appear to be left with the following conundrum: either Suárez is unreasonably reluctant to admit the univocity of the concept of being, or his notion of analogy is predicated upon a painfully obvious contradiction. In the present chapter, I argue that this conundrum is a false dilemma. If one bears in mind the existential and immanently transcendent doctrine of being that Suárez articulates, the dilemma dissolves. Indeed, as we shall see, being's analogical character results ineluctably from the prior metaphysical determinations that Suárez has made in his *Disputationes metaphysicae.*

1. Equivocity

Suárez, as we have seen throughout the present volume, sets the parameters for his metaphysical discussions—including those pertaining to analogy—with an eye to satisfying, at least in part, the demonstrative requirements that pertain to metaphysics insofar as it is an Aristotelian science. Among those requirements is the need for a distributed middle term. Without such a term, any purported demonstration will either fall prey to the fallacy of equivocation or will fail to unite the extreme terms of a syllogism with necessity.[15] For this reason, Suárez quickly dismisses the thesis that, with respect to God and creature as well as with respect to substance and accident, the concept of being is equivocal.[16]

In the opening to his *Categories*, Aristotle defined equivocals (ὁμώνυμα) as those things that have the same name but differ in nature (λόγος τῆς οὐσίας).[17] In his commentary on the *Categories*, Boethius divides equivocals (*aequivoca*) into those that are equivocal by chance (*aequivoca a casu*) and those that have some relation between or among each other (*aequivoca a consilio*).[18] With respect to the latter division, Boethius, to explain the nature of that 'relation,' further subdivides *aequi-*

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[14] *DM* 2.2.36 (vol. 25, 81): "Re tamen vera neutram negari necesse est, quia ad univocationem non sufficit quod conceptus in se sit aliquo modo unus, sed necesse est ut aequali habitudine et ordine respiciat multa, quod non habet conceptus entis…."

[15] Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 2.2.

[16] See *DM* 28.3.1; ibid., 32.2.1.

[17] Aristotle, *Categories* 1.1a1-2. Cf. Joseph Owens, *The Doctrine of Being in the Aristotelian Metaphysics: A Study in the Background of Mediaeval Thought* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1978), 112. Owens points out that what is at issue in the opening chapter of the *Categories* are not just 'terms,' but the 'things' themselves. Nevertheless, Ashworth notes that thinkers more proximate to Suárez, such as Francisco de Toledo, employed univocity and equivocity with respect to terms. See Ashworth, "Suárez on the Analogy of Being: Some Historical Background," *Vivarium* 33 (1995): 52, n. 10.

[18] Boethius, *In Categorias Aristotelis*, lib. 1 (PL vol. 64, col. 166B).

voca into those that are based on some similitude, proportion, relation from one thing (*ab uno*), or relation to one thing (*ad unum*).[19] As E.J. Ashworth points out, the development and division of these terms until Suárez's era is extraordinarily rich and variegated.[20] One may ask, then: what sense of 'equivocity' does Suárez reject when describing the metaphysical relationship between God and creature as well as substance and accident? From his discussion of equivocity relative to Peter Aureoli and Moses Maimonides, it is clear that Suárez has 'chance equivocity' (*aequivoca a casu*) in mind.

Though Aureoli is often associated with the thesis that being is said of God and creatures "merely equivocally" (*mere aequivoce*), Suárez protests that this is not actually the case. Aureoli only claims that 'being' is not said of God and creature according to *one* concept. The denial of a singular concept which, granted is tantamount to the rejection of univocity, still remains consistent with certain forms of analogy. A number of Thomists, for instance, thought that the nature of analogy consists in the proportional relation of a multiplicity of concepts. Suárez does not mention him explicitly within the present passage, but Cajetan is well known for this proportional view of analogy vis-à-vis being.[21] Since there is a proportional relationship between the two concepts of being as they pertain to God and creature, those concepts are not merely chance equivocals, as is the case with the concept 'bank,' which pertains to the side of a river and to a financial institution. Both are called 'bank' but without any relation to one another. Since the proportions or relations of similitude that pertain to *aequivoca a consilio* constitute more than a mere nominal community, some medieval thinkers hold that they can serve as the basis for certain types of analogical communities.[22] Accordingly, if Suárez rejects the claim that Aureoli is committed to equivocity, it can only be equivocity in the sense of chance equivocals (*aequivoca a casu*). We might say, then, that for Suárez "mere equivocity" involves at least the following two factors: (1) more than one concept and (2) a merely nominal community among the things that the concepts signify.[23] The question remains whether, in contrast to *aequivoca a casu*,

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Ashworth, "Suárez on the Analogy of Being: Some Historical Background," *Vivarium* 33 (1995): 50-75.

[21] Cajetan, *De nominum analogia*, c. 5, n. 58. Cf. Joshua Hochschild, *The Semantics of Analogy: Rereading Cajetan's* De Nominum Analogia (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), 129-42.

[22] See *DM* 28.3.3. Cf. Wolter, *The Transcendentals and Their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus* (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1946), 35.

[23] José Hellín lists seven characteristics of equivocity (including the two that I have mentioned), but it is clear that some of those characteristics are derivative from the two listed. For example, if equivocity always involves two or more concepts, then an equivocal term cannot serve as a middle term in a syllogism, which he lists as the fourth characteristic of equivocity. Cf. Hellín, *La analogia del ser y el conocimiento de Dios en Suarez* (Madrid: Gráficas Uguina, 1947), 30-33.

an analogy established on the basis of *aequivoca a consilio* is sufficient for Suárez's metaphysical purposes. I shall return to this question in what follows.

In contrast to Aureoli, Moses Maimonides, as Suárez reads him, satisfies both conditions for mere equivocity. Since finite creatures are infinitely "distant" (*distet*) from God, Maimonides denies that there can be any proportion between the finite (creature) and the infinite (God). Without such a proportion there is no basis for a more-than-nominal community. If there is no proportion, then the names attributed to creatures would have no relation whatsoever to the same names attributed to God. Yet, in agreement with Thomas Aquinas, Suárez argues that such a thesis is problematic not only because it is prejudicial to analogy but, more concerningly, because it would destroy the possibility of any (natural) knowledge of God. Given the merely nominal community between God and creation, one's reasoning with respect to God would inevitably fall prey to the fallacy of equivocation.[24] For example, in the effort to demonstrate something about God's 'infinite being' (=B_I) from creatures' 'finite being' (=B_F), there would not really be one concept of 'being' (=B) that could be used as a middle term, but two: 'B_I' and 'B_F'.

That a natural knowledge of God should be rendered impossible is, for both Thomas and Suárez, absurd. Moreover, Suárez insists that there is truly a relation of similarity between God and creature established on the metaphysical basis of a cause-effect relation. That relation is more than merely nominal, since it follows upon the very structure of *being itself*, which is the first and most fundamental of all effects that a cause produces. In light of the cause-effect relation, there arises a metaphysical community in which "being [is not] said of God and creature by chance or fortuitously, but according to some similitude, proportion, or agreement among them."[25]

Nevertheless, one might object to Suárez's accusation of absurdity in his rejection of equivocation. He has not yet demonstrated that God exists, nor has he shown that such a demonstration is even possible. In this regard, Doyle has suggested that there is a certain degree of circularity in Suárez's metaphysical procedure. Prior to *DM* 28, the unity of the concept of being is assumed in order to secure the possibility of demonstrating God's existence. Now, in *DM* 28, Suárez presupposes God's existence in order to demonstrate the unity of the concept of being.[26]

I do not think that, regarding the unity of the concept of being, Suárez is guilty of the circular reasoning that Doyle suggests. As we saw in Chapter Two, Suárez argues for the unity of the objective concept of being on the basis of the unity of the formal concept of being.[27] In so doing, he offers several arguments, none of

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[24] Cf. Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 13, a. 5.

[25] *DM* 28.3.1 (vol. 26, 13): "… neque mere casu et fortuito ens dictum esse de Deo et creaturis, sed propter aliquam similitudinem, proportionem aut convenientiam eorum inter se."

[26] Doyle, "Suarez on the Analogy of Being," 54.

[27] See ch. 2, pp. 74-77 supra; cf. *DM* 2.1.9-14.

which formally relies upon the ability or desire to prove God's existence.[28] There is nothing particularly novel about this maneuver since, as Ashworth shows in her work devoted to medieval and post-medieval logic, debates regarding analogy in the sixteenth century pertained, at least in part, to "whether one imprecise concept matched with more than one precise concept, or [whether] one formal concept matched with more than one objective concept."[29]

One must also bear in mind that, as noted in the Introduction, for Suárez, there is a reciprocal and mutually enriching relationship between theology and metaphysics. Oftentimes his theological commitments help inform and direct his metaphysical determinations. By faith, Suárez—just as much as Thomas[30]—is convinced that God can be naturally known through creation. Saint Paul reassures his readers of that fact in his letter to the Romans, which Suárez cites:[31] "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."[32] One might say that Suárez, in a fashion reminiscent of Kant's transcendental deduction, is simply inquiring into the metaphysical conditions of such knowledge. One need not rely on Kant, however, to justify the Suárezian project since, as already mentioned, the metaphysical community of cause and effect, together with Suárez's creedal commitments, suffice to establish the possibility of attaining a natural knowledge of God.[33] The question now is, since equivocity precludes such a possibility, is that possibility rendered more viable by univocity or analogy?

2. Univocity and the Unity of Being

Jean-Luc Marion expresses his dismay over Suárez's appeal to Thomas Aquinas's repudiation of equivocity. Whereas Thomas opposed equivocity to defend analogy, Suárez uses Thomas's argument to secure the unity of the objective concept of being.[34] That unity does not "directly" result in univocity, Marion admits, but "it at least impedes analogy in assuring one *ratio substantiae* equal to the created and the uncreated, that is to say, in admitting the indistinction of being."[35] As Boulnois will after him, Marion thinks that such "indistinct being" is the "object of the intel-

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28 *DM* 2.2.9-14.

29 Ashworth, "Equivocation and Analogy in Fourteenth-Century Logic: Ockham, Burley and Buridan," in, ed. Burkhard Mojsisch and Olan Pluta, *Historia Philosophiae Medii Aevi: Studien zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 1991), 24.

30 Cf. Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 2, a. 2, *sed contra*.

31 *DM* 29.2.6.

32 Rom. 1:20.

33 *DM* 28.3.1.

34 Marion, *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes*, 77.

35 Ibid., 81: "… le concept objectif d'être ne conclut pas directement à l'univocité de l'être; mais il interdit du moins l'analogie, en assurant une *ratio substantiae* égale au créé et a l'incréé, c'est-à-dire en admettant l'indistinction de l'être…."

lect."[36] The insinuation here is that Suárez's notion of the objective concept of being pertains not to the dynamic structures of existence but to what emerges instead as an object of thought, or, as Courtine puts it, "'objectivity without an object,' the possible, the thinkable, or something in general (*etwas*, τι)."[37] Objectivity sets the condition for being and, along with it, being's univocal character. To Marion's mind, such an account of being, though decisive for early modern, (univocal) representationalist ontologies,[38] "irreparably warps theological understanding."[39] It "warps" theology because the irreducibility of God is, in fact, reduced and divine transcendence is razed. The mystery of God is frozen in an idolatrous concept that human understanding fashions for itself. That concept ultimately reflects back and arrests one's own hubristic and contemptible, metaphysical gaze.[40]

The accusations of conceptual idolatry are mistaken, for Marion and Courtine have mischaracterized Suárez's actual position. First, as noted in Chapter One, Suárez insists that being taken as the object of the intellect is distinct from being taken as the object of metaphysics.[41] What is more, thought-objects or beings of reason are excluded from both objects of the intellect and of metaphysics. With respect to metaphysics, as we have seen, insofar as real being is identified as its object, there is an undeniable existential reference. It is simply not the case that the Suárezian metaphysics is concerned *tout court* with thought-objects. Second, Suárez rejects equivocation and defends the unity of the concept of being, not because being has been reduced to the thinkable, but in order to preserve the scientific character of metaphysics, especially in its efforts to demonstrate God's existence. The dynamics pertaining to that scientific structure receive no consideration, however, in Marion's exposition. Third, despite what Marion and Walter Hoeres suggest, it is not the case that Suárez's defense of the unity of the objective concept of being necessarily commits him to univocity or impedes analogy.[42] I shall return to this last claim momentarily. More immediately, it is important to determine why maintaining the unity of the objective concept of being is critical to Suárez's metaphysical project.

There can be no doubt that Suárez's defense of the unity of the *conceptus objectivus entis* places him in close proximity to Duns Scotus's thinking regarding univocity. In fact, Suárez treats Scotus's thesis with more than a modicum of sympathy, as can be seen from his summary of Scotus's argument. "Since being [*ens*]

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36 Cf. ibid.: "… elle-même fondée sur la primauté en l'être de l'*intellectus* qui y trouve l'objet d'un concept."

37 Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 535: "… «l'objectité sans objet» au possible, au pensable, au quelque chose en général (*etwas*, τι)."

38 Marion, *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes*, 85.

39 Ibid., 95: "… en gauchit peut-être irrémédiablement la compréhension théologique."

40 Marion, *God Without Being*, trans. Thomas Carlson (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 1991), 11-17.

41 See chapter 1, p. 43 supra; cf. *Tractatus de Anima*, lib. 4, c. 1, n. 9.

42 This is true not only for Suárez but also for many scholastic thinkers following in his wake. I shall touch upon this matter in the conclusion to the present chapter.

immediately signifies one concept common to God and creatures, it is not therefore said of them analogically but univocally."[43] Remarkably, in his presentation of Scotus's thesis, Suárez does not present any of Scotus's own arguments nor does he cite any particular Scotistic text. Instead, Suárez declares that the antecedent of Scotus's argument (viz., the concept of being is one) is actually established earlier within the *Disputationes metaphysicae* itself![44]

Scotus frames the unity of the common concept of being in terms of a *simpliciter simplex conceptus*. We recall that the *simpliciter simplex* concept of being, irresolvable into more elemental concepts, is utterly determinable and thus indifferent to the differences that determine it to become this or that kind of thing.[45] The concept of being, together with the concepts of ultimate differences (including modal determinations such as 'finite' or 'infinite'), are precisely such *simpliciter simplex* concepts, which, as Alan Wolter explains, means that they are "barest in content" and minimal "in the order of comprehension."[46] Richard Cross echoes this description when he claims that the concept of being is "maximal in extension and minimal in intension."[47] In contrast to *simpliciter simplex* concepts, simple concepts (e.g., 'infinite being' or 'finite being'), though conceived by a single act of the intellect—on account of which they are simple rather than complex—are resolvable into *simpliciter simplex* concepts (viz., the utterly determinable concept 'being' and the determining concepts 'infinite' and 'finite').[48] As such, they are more determinate in their intensions—and consequently less maximal in their extensions—than *simpliciter simplex* concepts. Finally, complex concepts, conceived through more than one act of the intellect, are even more intensionally determinate and are resolvable into several concepts. For example, the complex concept 'tall man' is resolvable to the concepts 'tall' and 'man.' In turn, the concept 'man' is resolvable into the concepts 'rational' and 'animal;' and so forth.

We further recall from our earlier discussions that Scotus utilizes a *subjetum-proprietas* compositional model to describe the transcendental relationship between being and its attributes. There are three features to this model. First, to say that the *simpliciter simplex* concept of being is indifferent to its modal determinations or differences entails that the concept of being is, as already noted, utterly determinable.[49] The concept of being stands in a state of potentiality, as it were, to

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43 *DM* 28.3.2 (vol. 26, 13): "… quia ens immediate significat conceptum unum communem Deo et creaturis; ergo non dicitur de illis analogice, sed univoce."

44 Ibid.

45 As we shall see in what follows, Suárez rejects the notion that being is indifferent, which is why it must be analogical.

46 Wolter, *The Transcendentals and Their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus*, 70.

47 Cross, *Duns Scotus on God* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 251-54.

48 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 1-2, nn. 51, 71; cf. idem, *Lectura* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 1-2, n. 68. Though concepts such as 'infinite being' and 'finite being' are syntactically complex, Scotus remains committed to their conceptual simplicity.

49 Ibid., I, d. 8, pars 1, q. 3, n. 113.

the actualization of some determining concept (i.e., 'infinite' or 'finite,' 'necessary' or 'contingent,' etc.).[50] Second, if being is utterly determinable and indifferent to any further modal or categorial determinations, then being is distinct from those determinations: "being [*ens*] is not said in '*quid*' of everything that is intelligible per se, since [it is not said] of ultimate differences nor of the proper attributes of being."[51] Moreover, the distinction between being and its ultimate differences, while less than that between a 'thing and a thing' (*res et res*), is nevertheless *ex natura rei*[52] or grounded in reality (*in re*) antecedent to any operation of the intellect.[53] Third, since the concept of being is utterly determinable and indifferent to any subsequent determination, the indifference of the *conceptus entis* constitutes not only its unity but also its univocal character. For Scotus, the unity, indifference, and univocity of the *conceptus entis* constitute the novelty of his transcendental project, wherein transcendentality does not require extensional maximalism. Instead, "the nature of a transcendental is not to have any predicate over it except being [*ens*]."[54]

Given such an innovative conception of transcendentality, one can appreciate why the disjunctive transcendentals, having nothing supervenient to them except being in its indifference, are properly ranked as transcendentals. What is more, for Scotus, such 'indifference' simply amounts to univocity. Wolter is not the least bit hyperbolic when he remarks that, for Duns Scotus, "the doctrine of univocity runs through the whole theory of the transcendentals."[55] Further still, the correlative nature of the disjunctive transcendentals provides the mechanism through which Scotus can demonstrate God's existence. If there is a 'finite being,' there must be an 'infinite being.' Yet, such a demonstration can only succeed validly and soundly if 'being' is univocal to both 'finite being' and 'infinite being.'

Establishing the conditions for the possibility of demonstrating God's existence pertains to the second issue raised above, namely, the motive for defending a unitary *conceptus entis*. For Scotus, the univocal concept of being plays a "salutary"

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[50] Ibid., I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 3, n. 133. Cf. Wolter, *The Transcendentals and Their Function in the Metaphysics of John Duns Scotus*, 83, 86-87, 86, n. 95.

[51] Ibid., I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 3, n. 131 (ed. Vatican, vol. 3, 81): "… ens non est univocum dictum in 'quid' de omnibus per se intelligibilibus, quia non de differentiis ultimis, nec de passionibus propriis entis."

[52] Ibid., I, d. 8, pars 1, q. 3, n. 139.

[53] Honnefelder has claimed that Suárez misinterprets Scotus's thinking regarding the nature of the distinction at play between being and its differences and that, moreover, Suárez's own position is virtually a reproduction of Scotus's thesis. See Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens*, 229-34. Nevertheless, as Daniel Heider rightly counters, (1) there can be no doubt that Scotus does advance a distinction between being and its modes that is *ante operationem intellectus*, which is contrary to Suárez's own thesis. Also (2) it is evident that Suárez regards Scotus, precisely because of the kind of distinction at issue, as his principal opponent in arguing for the immanent transcendence of being. See Heider, "Is Suárez's Concept of Being Univocal or Analogical?" *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 81 (2008): 32; 34, n. 50.

[54] Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I d. 8, pars 1, q. 3, n. 114 (ed. Vatican, vol. 4, 206): "Unde de ratione transcendentis est non habere praedicamentum supraveniens nisi ens…."

[55] Wolter, *The Transcendentals and Their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus*, 12.

role in preserving the scientific status of both metaphysics and theology.[56] Other thinkers, however, such as Henry of Ghent—whom Scotus submits to severe critique—appealed to analogy in order to procure a natural knowledge of God.[57] Nevertheless, to Scotus's lights, any successful analogy could only be established first on the basis of an underlying univocal concept. Without such univocity, analogy would result in equivocity.[58]

Such equivocity is, to Scotus's mind, what occurs in the case of Henry of Ghent's account of analogy. Indeed, for Henry, the analogical concept of being as it pertains to God and creature is not really one concept at all but two irreducibly distinct concepts enjoying a mutual similitude on the basis of their "indeterminate" character. The concept of being as it pertains to God and the concept of being pertaining to creatures are 'indeterminate' in different ways. As it pertains to God, the concept of being is "negatively indeterminate" (=B_{NI}) in the sense that no additional determination can be made to God who is just the unqualified fullness of being itself. The concept of being attributed to creatures, however, is "privatively indeterminate" (=B_{PI}) insofar as such being is susceptible to those further determinations that make a creature this or that *kind* of being.[59] B_{NI} and B_{PI} are said to be similar to one another insofar as each involves some form of 'indetermination,' which rules out a chance equivocal relation between them. Additionally, since they are not indeterminate in an identical manner, B_{NI} and B_{PI} cannot be univocal. If neither univocal nor equivocal, then B_{NI} and B_{PI} must be analogical. Henry then makes a curious philosophical move when he claims that since (1) 'indeterminacy' by negation (*per abnegationem*) and 'indeterminacy' through privation are "near" (*propinquae*) to each other in the sense of conceptual similitude and since (2) by nature the intellect does not have the ability (*non potentis*) to perceive the distinction between these two senses of indeterminacy, the intellect conceives B_{NI} and B_{PI} as though they were one and the same simple concept of being.[60] Such a conception is actually an "error" since "in true reality they do not make one concept."[61] The intellect cannot conceive being *simpliciter* as common to both God and creature, for "if a human being conceives anything, that [thing] is either what pertains only to the being of God or what pertains only to the being of a creature."[62]

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56 See Thomas Williams, "The Doctrine of Univocity is True and Salutary," *Modern Theology* 21 (2005): 575-85.

57 Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 1-2, n. 20.

58 Cf. Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus*. Great Medieval Thinkers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 38; Allan Wolter, *The Transcendentals and Their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus*, 40-48.

59 Henry of Ghent, *Summa quaestionem ordinariarum*, a. 21, q. 2 (Paderborn, 1520; fol. 124vP-125rQ).

60 Ibid. (fol. 125rS).

61 Ibid. (fol. 125rS): "… tamen in rei veritate non faciunt unum conceptum."

62 Ibid. (fol. 124vO): "… si aliquod concipit homo, illud est aut quod pertinet ad esse dei tantum; aut quod pertinet ad esse creaturae tantum."

We recall from Suárez's discussion of Aureoli that to say being involves more than one concept does not necessarily commit one to mere equivocity. Rather, a multiplicity of concepts could serve as the basis for analogy along the lines of what Boethius identifies as *aequivoca a consilio*.[63] Henry's own account of analogy seems to be an instance of precisely the kind of analogy that Suárez had earlier described. The question is whether an analogy constructed on the basis of *aequivoca a consilio* will be successful in preserving a scientific metaphysics. Scotus and—to the degree that he follows the Franciscan on this point—Suárez are doubtful of such an effort's success. According to Scotus, the "error" by which Henry claims that the intellect construes B_{NI} and B_{PI} utterly vitiates the scientific character of metaphysics and along with it the Christian claim—to which he and Suárez are committed—that natural knowledge of the divine being is possible. Richard Cross rightly notes that if B_{NI} and B_{PI} are simple and irreducible to anything more common—say, to 'B'—then Henry's account entails that B_{NI} and B_{PI} have nothing in common at all.[64] Yet, Scotus warns that "if some concept said of God and creature is analogical and really two concepts [B_{NI} and B_{PI}], we would know absolutely nothing of God."[65] Consequently, it would turn out to be impossible, beginning with a consideration of some creaturely character or *ratio*, to determine some corresponding and putatively analogical divine attribute. Scotus warns, "Indeed it could no more be concluded that God is formally wise from that *ratio* of wisdom that we apprehend from creatures, than that God is formally a stone."[66] As it turns out, Henry's argument, if pushed far enough, actually undermines the possibility of attaining any univocal concept whatsoever: "if you say human being has one concept [H] with respect to Socrates [H_S] and Plato [H_p], it will be denied to you, and it will be said that there are two concepts [H_S and H_p], but that they 'seem to be one' on account of their great similitude."[67] To Scotus's mind, however, to forsake all univocity would undermine science completely and plunge one into an epistemic crisis from which there would be no hope of rescue.

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[63] *DM* 28.3.1.

[64] Cross, *Duns Scotus*, 34-35.

[65] Duns Scotus, *Lectura* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 1-2, n. 25 (ed. Vatican, vol. 16, 233): "… si conceptus dictus de Deo et creatura sit analogus et realiter duo conceptus omnino nihil cognosceremus de Deo." Cf. idem, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 1, n. 40.

[66] Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 1-2, n. 40 (ed. Vatican, vol. 3, 27): "… immo non magis concludetur quod Deus est sapiens formaliter, ex ratione sapientiae quam apprehendimus ex creaturis, quam quod Deus est formaliter lapis…."

[67] Ibid., I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 1-2, n. 30 (ed. Vatican, vol. 3, 20): "… sed dicas quod quilibet habet duos conceptus in intellectu suo, propinquos, qui propter propinquitatem analogiae videntur esse unus conceptus, — contra hoc videtur esse quod tunc ex ista evasione videretur destructa omnis via probandi unitatem alicuius conceptus univocam: si enim dicis hominem habere unum conceptum ad Socratem et Platonem, negabitur tibi, et diceretur quod sunt duo, sed 'videntur unus' propter magnam similitudinem."

The univocity of the concept of being safeguards one from such a disaster and ensures *homo viator*'s natural ability to know something—even if imperfectly—about God. Scotus's concern to accommodate the scientific requirement of a distributed middle term is evident in his definition of univocity.

> And lest there be contention concerning the name of univocity, I call that concept univocal which is thus one because its unity suffices for producing a contradiction by affirming and denying it of the same thing; [and] it suffices for a syllogistic middle [term], as the extreme terms are thus united in the middle [term] without concluding to the fallacy of equivocation.[68]

That is good for Scotus, but how do the preceding considerations pertain to Suárez's understanding of analogy? As already intimated, Suárez's account involves two things: (1) the unity of the objective concept of being and (2) the analogical character of that same concept. Regarding the prior, while Suárez does not maintain that the concept of being is 'indifferent'—for reasons I shall soon discuss—he does agree with Scotus that the objective concept of being does not express any determinate being. "The formal concept of being corresponds to one adequate and immediate objective concept of being which does not expressly indicate substance, nor accidents, nor God, nor creatures, but all of them through a mode of unity."[69] Indeed, the concept of being is not only unified but "most simple and the first of all" (*simplicissimus et primum omnium*),[70] for when one "hears" the term 'being' one does not mentally perceive a substance as such (*ut sic*) nor an accident as such.[71] Similarly, one remains unaware whether that being is divine or creaturely.

Suárez's commitment to the unity of the objective concept of being even leads him to reject certain Thomistic arguments against univocity. While Suárez agrees with the Thomist claim that being is analogical, he thinks one must be cautious regarding the manner in which univocity is rejected. One cannot undermine univocity at the cost of destroying the unity of the concept of being. Yet, the Thomists come close to doing precisely that when they argue that any effect that does not equal the power of its cause cannot be univocal with respect to the cause. But no creature can equate to the power of God, which means no creature can be univocal in its being to God.[72] While this argument effectively undermines univocity, to Suárez's mind, it also compromises the unity of the

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[68] Ibid., I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 1-2, n. 26 (ed. Vatican, vol. 3, 18): "Et ne fiat contentio de nomine univocationis, univocum conceptum dico, quia ita est unus quod eius unitas sufficit ad contradictionem, affirmando et negando ipsum de eodem; sufficit etiam pro medio syllogistico, ut extrema unita in medio sic uno sine fallacia aequivocationis concludantur inter se uniri."

[69] *DM* 2.2.8 (vol. 25, 72): "… conceptui formali entis respondere unum conceptum objectivum adaequatum, et immediatum, qui expresse non dicit substantiam, neque accidens, neque Deum, nec creaturam, sed haec omnia per modum unius…."

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid., 2.2.9.

[72] Ibid., 28.3.7.

objective concept of being common to God and creature.[73] The unity of the objective concept is such that:

> If the *ratio entis*, just as it is in God, essentially includes something other than it does in a creature, that *ratio* cannot be one, and represented by one formal concept and constitute one objective concept; for it cannot be understood that in one concept as such there should be an essential variety.[74]

Why is Suárez, apparently just as much as Scotus, committed to the unity of the concept of being? The answer is: for the same reason as Scotus. Suárez's defense of the unity of the objective concept of being stems from his concern to ensure that the scientific demands of metaphysics and theology are rigorously met. In a passage that is striking for its similarity to Scotus's own description of univocal concepts, Suárez writes:

> Being [*ens*] is said of everything that falls under it in one concept, and therefore it is able to be a medium of demonstration, and the character of being in creatures can be a starting point for discovering a similar character existing in a higher mode in the creator.[75]

If Suárez thinks that the objective concept of being both (1) functions as a middle term because of its absolute simplicity and (2) expresses no determinate being—claims that Scotus also maintains—how is it not the case that being is univocal?[76] This is the moment in Suárez's account of analogy when many of his interpreters accuse him of inconsistency, if not outright self-contradiction. Walter Hoeres, for instance, pronounces that, "with Suarez as with Scotus, the *univocatio entis* will necessarily result already from the unity of the concept of being alone."[77] Similarly,

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[73] Ibid., 28.3.9.

[74] Ibid. (vol. 26, 15): "… si ratio entis, prout est in Deo, aliud essentialiter includit quam ut in creatura, ergo non potest illa ratio ita esse una, ut uno conceptu formali repraesentatur et unum conceptum objectivum constituat; nam intelligi non potest, quod in conceptu uno ut sic, sit varietas essentialis."

[75] Ibid., 28.3.15 (vol. 26. 18): "… ens uno conceptu dici de omnibus sub illo contentis, ideoque posse esse medium demonstrationis, et rationem entis in creaturis inventam posse esse initium inveniendi simile rationem altiori modo in creatore existentiam."

[76] Here, one might ask whether a Scotist could still meaningfully refer to Suárez's account of being as 'univocal' even though the Jesuit is himself a proponent of analogy. I think this question confuses the broader conceptual framework in which each thinker operates. As a number of scholars have suggested, for Scotus, univocity is entirely a semantic doctrine rather than a metaphysical thesis. See Cross, "Where Angels Fear to Tread: Duns Scotus and Radical Orthodoxy," *Antonianum* 76 (2001): 7-41 and Thomas Williams, "The Doctrine of Univocity is True and Salutary," *Modern Theology* 21 (2005): 575-585. Also, Scotus is clear that God and creature do not share in some common reality. See Scotus, *Ordinatio* I. d. 3, pars 1, q. 3, n. 163; ibid., d. 8, pars 1, q. 3, n. 82. For Suárez, in contrast, analogy functions metaphysically and is not fundamentally a matter of logic. Whereas the concept of being is indifferent to its *inferiora* or differences on Scotus's view, on account of which that concept is univocal, Suárez, as we have noted, rejects such indifference. The only way, then, that a Scotist could identify Suárez's thesis as embracing univocity is by warping the Suárezian notion of being itself. I address the import of these claims in what follows.

[77] Hoeres, "Francis Suarez and the Teaching of John Duns Scotus on *Univocatio Entis*," 265.

as we saw above, Marion complains that Suárez's commitment to the unity of an objective concept renders his entire thinking on analogy, at best, the clandestine acceptance of univocity or, at worst, simply contradictory. Honnefelder succinctly sums up the dilemma: "How can an absolutely simple conceptual content, since it is indeterminate with respect to individual modes of being, at the same time 'by itself' 'demand' a certain order of these modes?"[78]

Such accusations of a deep and abiding univocal commitment arise, in large part, from a failure to consider Suárez's doctrine of being holistically—especially with respect to its immanently transcendental and existential structure. As we have seen in previous chapters, Suárez develops that doctrine mainly within *DM* 2. Yet, interpreters such as Marion, apart from a strategic yet incomplete reference to *DM* 2.2.36—where, we recall, Suárez appears to undermine analogy for the sake of the unity of the concept of being—neglect the remaining content of that *disputatio*.[79] This is unfortunate, not only because the specificity of the Suárezian doctrine of being is neglected, but also because that particular text voices the very objection to Suárez's own position that Marion and so many other thinkers raise. In fact, the solution to the objection that Suárez himself provides helps untangle much of the scholarly confusion surrounding Suárezian analogy:

> [I]f the objective concept [of being] is one, [it is] either the unity of univocation, and thus analogy is destroyed, or [it is] only an analogical unity, and thus either [the concept] is not in fact one, or it is repugnant in terms, since analogy intrinsically includes, either several *rationes* that have only a proportion among them, or several relations to one form, by reason of which the objective concept of the name analogy cannot be one.[80]

Suárez addresses his comments in *DM* 2.2.36 to the same objection contemporary interpreters bring to bear. Yet, he insists that one does not have to choose between the unity of the concept of being or analogy, for they can both be maintained. Suárez is able irenically to defend both unity and analogy because univocity means something different for Suárez than it does for Duns Scotus. Suárez states: "it does not suffice for univocity that a concept in itself be [1] one in some way, but it is necessary that it [2] have an equal relation and order with respect to many."[81] While

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[78] Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens*, 291: "Wei kann ein schlechthin einfacher, weil auf die je einzelnen Weisen der Seiendheit hin unbestimmter Begriffsgehalt zugleich »aus sich« eine bestimmte Ordnung dieser Weisen »fordern«?"

[79] Marion, *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes*, 102-103.

[80] *DM* 2.2.1 (vol. 25, 70): "… si conceptus eius obiectivus est unus, vel unitate univocationis, et sic tollitur analogia, vel unitate tantum analoga, et sic vel revera non est unus, vel est repugnantia in terminis, quia analogia intrinsece includit, vel plures rationes habentes tantum inter se proportionem, vel plures habitudines ad unam formam, ratione quarum conceptus obiectivus nominis analogi non potest esse unus."

[81] Ibid., 2.2.36 (vol. 25, 81): "… quia ad univocationem non sufficit quod conceptus in se sit aliquo modo unus, sed necesse est ut aequali habitudine et ordine respiciat multa, quod non habet conceptus entis, ut latius citato loco exponemus."

a unified concept may be necessary for univocity, it is not sufficient. In addition, univocity requires an equal order or relation between the concept and its *inferiora*. But the objective concept of being lacks such an 'equal order.' Herein emerges a significant difference between Scotus and Suárez. For the former, only a logical set of conditions needs to be satisfied for univocity. Suárez, in contrast, thinks that one cannot determine whether or not something is univocal or analogical without consideration of its metaphysical relation to its *inferiora*.[82] Since the objective concept of being bears an unequal relation to its *inferiora*, being cannot be univocal, which means it must be analogical.[83] Needless to say, the central question is: how can the concept of being, which is not only one, but *simplicissimus*, of itself require an unequal order or relation to its *inferiora* without thereby compromising its absolute simplicity? We can only answer this question by considering what sense of 'analogy' Suárez has in mind with respect to being.

3. Analogy

By Suárez's time, analogy was generally taken in two fundamental senses: proper proportionality and attribution. While not named as such, both forms of analogy can be found utilized throughout the works of Thomas Aquinas. Yet, Thomas's ultimate position on the nature of analogy remains a matter of controversy both within late scholasticism and within the extensive contemporary literature devoted to the subject.[84] The reason for this controversy stems, in part, from Thomas's own inconsistent presentations.[85] The early *Sentences* (I, d. 35, q. 1, a. 4) shows preference for what is later called an analogy of attribution—described there as 'reference'—and later replaced by proper proportionality in *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 11. Beginning in 1256, however, with his *Summa contra gentiles* I, c. 32 Thomas "quietly abandons" proper proportionality for the sake of an analogy of reference once again.[86] This

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[82] Ibid., 28.3.18; cf. Heider, "Is Suárez's Concept of Being Analogical or Univocal?," 28.

[83] Indeed, as we shall soon see, it is precisely because being is immanently transcendent that it cannot possibly be univocal. For Scotus, in contrast, since the concept of being is *not* included within its differences—and thus thoroughly indifferent—it is univocal. Again, the diverse transcendental theories between the two thinkers make all the difference.

[84] Here, I shall only mention Hampus Lyttkens, *The Analogy between God and the World: An Investigation of its Background and Interpretation of its Use by Thomas of Aquino* (Uppsala: Almquist & Wiksells Boktryckeri AB, 1952); George Klubertanz, *St. Thomas Aquinas on Analogy: A Textual Analysis and Systematic Synthesis* (Chicago, IL: Loyola University Press, 1960); Bernard Montagnes, *La doctrine de l'analogie de l'être d'après saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Louvain-Paris: Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1963); Ralph McInerny, *Aquinas and Analogy* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1996).

[85] For a helpful discussion of Thomas's underlying doctrine of being as the reason for these shifts, see Montagnes, *La doctrine de l'analogie de l'être d'après saint Thomas d'Aquin*. For an account that describes the matter in terms of shifting emphases in the same doctrine of being rather than a change in doctrine itself, see my "The Twofold Character of Thomas Aquinas's Analogy of Being," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 49 (2008): 295-315.

[86] Klubertanz, *St. Thomas Aquinas on Analogy*, 94.

preference remains consistent throughout his mature works.[87] Subsequent generations of thinkers, Thomists and non-Thomists alike, would squabble over which form of analogy was adequate for the purposes of expressing and accommodating the structure of being.[88] Cajetan famously defended proper proportionality,[89] while Sylvester Ferrara attempted to resolve the various senses of analogy in terms of the *unius ad alterum* relation that constitutes attribution.[90] Others still, such as Suárez's own order-brother Pedro da Fonseca, attempted to synthesize both proper proportionality and attribution into a single account.[91]

3.1 Proper Proportionality

Both 'proper proportionality' and 'attribution' became codified forms of analogy, as it were, by the time Cajetan wrote his *De nominum analogia*. In that text, he attempts not so much to give a definitive account of Thomas Aquinas's thinking on analogy, as to "respond to Duns Scotus's semantic challenge" to analogy.[92] In his response to that challenge, Cajetan identifies both analogies of attribution and proper proportionality in addition to an analogy of inequality. This threefold enumeration derives from Thomas's *Sentences* I, d. 19, q. 5, a. 1, ad 1.[93] What becomes evident in Cajetan's discussion is that he privileges the Greek meaning of ἀναλογία in his determination of what the Latin term *analogia* means.[94] Since ἀναλογία pertains to a four-term, proportional relationship among two or more relations (e.g., a:b::c:d),[95] Cajetan regarded proper proportionality, which itself involves such relations of proportion, as analogy in the most proper sense. Among many Thomists, Cajetan's account of analogy became quasi-dogmatic such that, decades later, John of St. Thomas (Poinsot) commented that he had little to add

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[87] See, e.g., *Summa contra Gentiles* I, c. 32; *De potentia Dei*, q. 7, a. 7; *Summa theologiae* I, q. 13, a. 5.

[88] These debates would continue well into the twentieth century. In an article devoted to the subject, Joseph Owens argues that analogy, here understood in terms of proper proportionality, was inadequate for articulating Thomas Aquinas's existential understanding of being. See his, "Analogy as a Thomistic Approach to Being," *Mediaeval Studies* 24 (1962): 303-22.

[89] Cajetan, *De nominum analogia*, c. 6.

[90] Ferrara, *Commentaria in libros quatuor Contra gentiles sancti Thomae de Aquino* I, c. 34.

[91] Fonseca, *Commentaria in libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* (ed. Köln, 1615), lib. 4, c. 2, q. 1, sec. 6 (col. 705B).

[92] Hochschild, *The Semantics of Analogy*, 79.

[93] For a critique of Cajetan's interpretation of this text see Ralph McInerny, *Aquinas on Analogy* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1998), c. 1.

[94] As it turns out, the Latin *analogia* is much more extensive than the Greek ἀναλογία and includes πρός ἓν relations—such as is described in *Metaphysics* 4.2. The route from the Greek notions of 'analogy' to the Latin medieval sense of *analogia* was a long and circuitous one that traversed even Arabic interventions, especially the notion of *convenientia*, that made their way to Albertus Magnus and eventually to Thomas Aquinas and beyond. For a treatment of this history see Alain de Libera, *Métaphysique et noétique: Albert le Grand* (Paris: J. Vrin, 2005), c. 3; Jean-François Courtine, *Inventio analogiae: métaphysique et ontothéologie* (Paris: J. Vrin, 2005).

[95] See Aristotle, *Poetics* 1.21.1457b15-30.

to the magisterial treatment that Cajetan had already given in his *De nominum analogia*.[96]

It is not insignificant, then, that Suárez rejects proper proportionality in favor of attribution. As Suárez describes it, an analogy of proper proportionality is such that one set of proportions (*a*:*b*) enjoys some analogical character intrinsically, but another set of proportions (*c*:*d*) possesses that same character extrinsically in relation to the first proportion (*a*:*b*). The quintessential medieval example of proper proportionality is a "smiling meadow." Just as a smile (*a*) brightens the face of a person (*b*), the blooming flowers and vibrant flora (*c*) of a field brighten a meadow (*d*) and make it appear to "smile." Of course, unlike a human person who actually and intrinsically possesses the formal anatomical character of smiling, it is not really the case that a meadow itself possesses any 'smiling' quality in an intrinsic fashion. Rather, a meadow is called 'smiling' extrinsically according to its proportional relation to a smiling human face. In essence, an analogy of proper proportionality always involves "something metaphorical and improper."[97]

Given the extrinsic and metaphorical character of proper proportionality, it cannot sufficiently accommodate the *intrinsic* character of something precisely insofar as it is or possesses 'being.' While Suárez agrees that God is being itself, that fact does not undermine a creature's intrinsic reality. A creature is "being [*ens*] by reason of its own being [*esse*], absolutely and without such proportionality, since without a doubt through that [being] it is outside nothing and has some actuality."[98] Courtine cites this passage as support for his claim that Suárez's account of being is ultimately resolved in terms of that which stands outside of nothing.[99] Unfolding the meaning of being relative to non-being—more precisely the double negation not-nothing (*non nihil*)—plays into the reduction of being to the thinkable. I have already discussed the features of this interpretation, as well as its problems. Nevertheless, even here within an analogical context, Courtine's thesis of *non-nihil* does not adequately address the claims that the text makes. Suárez states that a being (*ens*) stands outside of nothing, not through a double negation or in terms of thinkability, but, again, by reason of its own existence (*esse*). Moreover, given that Suárez discounts proper proportionality on account of its being merely a matter of extrinsic denomination, he cannot emphasize the thinkability of non-contradiction, which, insofar as it is a matter of cognition, itself reduces to extrinsic denomination. Rather, he points to the intrinsic exercise of existence proper to each being. Since "a creature is truly, properly, and simply being [*ens*]," each creature enjoys its

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96 John of St. Thomas, *Cursus philosophicus*, Ars Logica, Pars II, q. 13, a. 3.

97 *DM* 28.3.11 (vol. 26, 16): "… omnis vera analogia proportionalitatis includit aliquid metaphorae et improprietatis…."

98 Ibid. (vol. 26, 16): "Creatura enim est ens ratione sui esse absolute et sine tali proportionalitate considerati, quia nimirum per illud est extra nihil et aliquid actualitatis habet…."

99 Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 532-33.

own existence, for which reason the improper or metaphorical character of proper proportionality is inadequate.[100]

Since a creature is a being "absolutely by reason of its own existence [*esse*]" and without denoting a relationship to God in terms of that being, Marion protests that the very notion of 'creation' has been placed into question and that Suárez has rendered it extrinsic to being itself.[101] Yet to say that a creature is truly a being on account of its own existence is not at all incompatible with the claim that its existence is *ab alio* (i.e., from God). In light of ongoing Protestant critiques of postlapsarian (human) nature as totally depraved, Suárez's Catholic insight that nature, though wounded by sin, remains integral unto itself forms an important feature of his thought.[102] This is just as true with respect to the most fundamental condition of a creature, namely, that it truly exists and stands apart from the nothingness out of which it has been created. What God creates is being *simpliciter*, and that being possesses its own intrinsic intelligible structure. To say that creation is an "extrinsic" mode of being is like saying that 100 degrees Celsius is an extrinsic mode of heat.[103] It is one thing to say that the notion of 'heat' does not express any particular degree, but it is another matter entirely to say that the reality of heat is such that it is entirely distinct from and indifferent to any of its instantiations within various particular degrees. The same holds for being in its immanent transcendence, as we shall shortly discuss.

Finally, though Suárez only obliquely refers to the matter, proper proportionality's use, not of a single concept of being, but—similar to what Henry of Ghent thought—of multiple proportional concepts renders proper proportionality disastrous for science. This concern emerges when Suárez confronts an argument against analogy in favor of univocity. Unlike a univocal term, which is posited through a 'single imposition,' analogical terms, like equivocal terms, involve multiple impositions.[104] As such, both analogical and equivocal terms require multiple and distinct concepts corresponding to the different impositions of meaning that they involve. The concept of being, however, involves only one imposition; therefore it cannot be equivocal or analogical.[105]

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[100] *DM* 28.3.11 (vol. 26, 16): "… nam creatura vere, proprie ac simpliciter est ens…."

[101] Marion, *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes*, 101-102.

[102] In his *De gratia*, prol. 5, c. 7, for example, Suárez critiques Calvin's thesis that the human will has lost freedom as a result of original sin. There can be no doubt that sin affects our human condition, but the will, Suárez insists, has its own nature (i.e., the freedom of indifference), which is not destroyed through sin. What is more, even one's freedom, an intrinsic character of the will, ultimately depends upon God's concomitant causality. Human nature is integral unto itself but is nevertheless utterly dependent upon God. What is true of human nature is true also of the structure of created being.

[103] Compare this with Suárez's example to the contrary regarding 'quantity' vis-à-vis 'equality' and 'inequality' in *DM* 3.1.5.

[104] For discussions of late medieval semiotic theories of which 'imposition' is a part see the many works of E.J. Ashworth, for example, *Language and Logic in the Post-Medieval Period* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1974); idem, *The Tradition of Medieval Logic and Speculative Grammar* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1977); idem, *Studies in Post-Medieval Semantics* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1985).

[105] *DM* 28.3.3. Cf. Ibid., 32.2.13

In his response to this argument, Suárez rejects the claim that to be common to many according to a single imposition pertains exclusively to univocity. While some forms of analogy do involve multiple impositions and thus multiple concepts, this is true "only of those [analogies] which are said through metaphor or transference."[106] Since proper proportionality involves metaphor and transference, admittedly, it will involve a multiplicity of concepts. Likewise, an extrinsic analogy of attribution involves multiple impositions.[107] Accordingly, it will not involve one objective concept common to the analogates that could serve as a middle term.[108] If this is true of an extrinsic analogy of attribution, how much more will it be true of proper proportionality, which involves not only extrinsic denomination, but also distinct sets of relations expressed through equally distinct concepts. Nevertheless, the multiplicity of concepts pertaining both to proper proportionality and extrinsic attribution does not pertain to analogy per se since there is at least one form of analogy (viz., intrinsic attribution) that involves only a single imposition and, consequently, a unified concept.

3.2 Attribution

The analogy of reference or, as it was termed in late scholasticism, 'attribution' was an alternative to proper proportionality and modeled after Aristotle's description of πρός ἓν relations. Though being is said in many ways, Aristotle argues that it is not merely equivocal (οὐχ ὁμωνύμως) since being is always said in reference to a single nature (πρός ἓν καί μίαν τινὰ φύσιν).[109] That "single nature" to which being in its several senses refers is substance. Curiously, the classic examples used to illustrate the πρός ἓν character of being—namely, 'health' (ὑγίεια) and 'medical art' (ἰατρικὸν)—are rather unfitting for expressing the intrinsic nature of that πρός ἓν relation to substance. Diet, medicine, urine, and an animal, to use Thomas Aquinas's examples, are called 'healthy,' not because they have the same *ratio*—as would be required for univocity—but because they refer to the same thing. A diet is called 'healthy' because it conserves health; medicine is called 'healthy' insofar as it produces or restores health; urine is called 'healthy' because it is a sign of health (or the lack thereof); and, finally, an animal is called 'healthy' insofar as it is the subject of health.[110] Similar examples can be supplied—and in fact are by Thomas Aquinas—with respect to 'medical.'

Each example is only an instance of extrinsic denomination. As such, each would seem to be unfitting since it does not adequately express the intrinsic character of

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[106] Ibid., 28.3.22 (vol. 26, 21): "… sed illorum tantum quae per metaphoram seu translationem dicuntur."

[107] I explain what is meant by 'extrinsic analogy of attribution' in what follows.

[108] *DM* 28.3.14.

[109] Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 4.2.1003b5-10.

[110] Thomas, *In Metaph.*, lib. 4, lect. 1, n. 9, ed. M.-R. Cathala (Rome: Marietti, 1950).

being. While 'health' may exist intrinsically within an animal of which it is a quality, there is no intrinsic *ratio*, quality, or character within a certain diet, within a certain dosage of medicine, or even within urine. After all, a buffalo burger because of its low cholesterol may make a healthy meal for a health-conscious person, but it is hardly healthy for the buffalo from which it has been made. Nevertheless, the analogical community of being does not consist in the intrinsic possession of being within one member and only extrinsically for the rest. It would be absurd to say that something is a real being (*ens reale*) through extrinsic denomination, for an extrinsic denomination posits nothing real in the denominated thing.[111] To return to the πρός ἓν relation of an accident to its substance, while an accident might be called 'being' because of its reference to or dependence upon a substance, the accident nevertheless possesses being intrinsically.

Additionally, Aristotle's examples involve a reference of 'many to one.' That is, diet, medicine, and urine (the 'many') are called 'healthy' because of their relation to some 'one' supervenient subject of health: the animal. Yet Aristotle maintains that being is not a genus—much less is it a Platonic Form—in which different kinds of being participate for their being. It is not the case that substance, accidents, affections, etc., all participate in something higher (i.e., being); for no such higher reality exists. Rather, an accident, an affection, a generation, etc., are each called 'being' insofar as each directly relates to a substance. A (primary) substance, however, is just being in itself or per se and thus serves as the prime analogate. The one-to-one relation between the primary analogate (substance) and its secondary analogate (accident) became known within medieval and scholastic thought as 'an attribution of one to another' (*attributio unius ad alium*).

When he describes the analogical character of being with respect to God and creation, Suárez is mindful of the caveats and distinctions just mentioned. While he thinks God and creatures are related in terms of attribution, it is not the case that the attribution in question is 'many to one.' Suárez rejects such an analogy of many to one because, obviously, it would commit one to the claim that there is something (i.e., a *tertium quid*) metaphysically prior to God. But "nothing can be thought to be prior to God and creature, such that through an order to it both God and a creature are named 'beings.'"[112] This is an important qualification to make for, in defending the unity of the objective concept of being, Suárez is not thereby positing some neutral, subsistent ontological reality prior to God and creature. Marion fails to take this aspect of Suárez's teaching into consideration when he complains that Suárez displaces the priority of God with a supposed priority of the objective concept.[113] In fact, this is also a common misunderstanding with respect

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[111] *DM* 32.2.14.

[112] Ibid., 28.3.12 (vol. 26, 16-17): "… nihil potest excogitari prius Deo et creatura, ut per ordinem ad illud tam Deus quam creatura entia nominentur."

[113] See Marion, *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes*, 96.

to Duns Scotus, who some take to posit a neutral or indifferent reality over and above God and creature.[114] Nevertheless, Scotus, just as much as Suárez, rejects the notion that anything is metaphysically prior to God. While he grants that there is a conceptual agreement between God and creatures in terms of the *concept* of being, Scotus insists that there is no agreement *in re*.[115]

Rejecting an attribution of 'many to one,' Suárez settles instead upon an attribution of 'one to another.' At the heart of such an analogy is the understanding that a creature fundamentally stands in a relation of dependence upon God as an effect does to its cause. Yet, even here Suárez makes another qualification. An analogy of attribution of one to another can also be either extrinsic or intrinsic. Such is what one finds to be the case with respect to 'health' (*sanus*), which example Aristotle himself supplies to illustrate πρός ἓν equivocation. Apart from the primary analogate (viz., the animal), other 'healthy' things are so denominated extrinsically in relationship to the animal. With respect to an intrinsic analogy of attribution, however, the members of the analogical community (i.e., primary and secondary analogates) intrinsically possess the analogical *ratio*. The relationship between a substance and accident captures such an intrinsic analogy of attribution. As already stated, "an accident is not denominated 'being' [*ens*] extrinsically from the entity of a substance, but through its proper and intrinsic entity, which is such that it completely consists in a certain relation to substance."[116] Suárez does not deny that an accident depends upon a substance for its being, but that dependence does not imply that that being is merely extrinsic. The same pertains to the relationship between creatures and God.

Suárez marks four differences between intrinsic and extrinsic analogies of attribution constituted as a relation of *z* to *y*, wherein *y* is the primary analogate to which *z*, the secondary analogate, stands in a relation of attribution signified by a certain name (*nomen*) *x*.

First, in an extrinsic analogy of attribution, *x* signifies an intrinsic form or nature that is proper to *y*. With respect to *z*, however, *x* only signifies something "improperly and through metaphor" (*improprie et per metaphoram*). In an intrinsic

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[114] Members of Radical Orthodoxy have offered precisely such an interpretation and have been rightly critiqued for their gross misunderstanding of Scotus. See John Milbank, *The Word Made Strange: Theology, Language, Culture* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 1997), 41-49; Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), esp. 122; idem, "Duns Scotus: His Historical and Contemporary Significance," *Modern Theology* 21 (2005): 543-74. For critiques see Richard Cross, "Where Angels Fear to Tread: Duns Scotus and Radical Orthodoxy," *Antonianum* 76 (2001): 7-41; Thomas Williams, "The Doctrine of Univocity is True and Salutary," *Modern Theology* 21 (2005): 575-85.

[115] Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 8, pars 1, q. 3, n. 82. Cf. ibid., I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 3, n. 163.

[116] *DM* 28.3.14 (vol. 26, 17): "… accidens enim non denominatur ens extrinsece ab entitate substantiae, sed a propria et intrinseca entitate, quae talis est, ut tota consistat in quadam habitudine ad substantiam."

attribution there is no metaphor and, consequently, *x* properly designates some reality or nature that is intrinsic to both *y* and *z*.

Second, in an extrinsic attribution *x* signifies *z* in terms of *z*'s relation to *y* such that *y* enters into the definition of *x*. As an example, Suárez remarks that to explain why 'medicine' (*z*) is called 'healthy' (*x*) one must make reference to an animal (*y*), the health of which medicine conserves or produces. In an intrinsic attribution, however, *z* is not defined through *y*. Here, one might object that, according to Aristotle, an accident is in fact defined in terms of substance,[117] which Suárez, by portraying the substance-accident relation as an instance of intrinsic attribution, neglects to take into account. In response, Suárez concedes that an accident is in fact defined through a substance but that is with respect to its character as an accident and not with respect to its character as a *being*. "For an accident is not being [*ens*] through extrinsic denomination to a substance, but through its intrinsic entity, according to which it has its own proper existence [*esse*]."[118]

Third, in an extrinsic attribution *x* does not designate one concept common to *y* and *z*. Rather, *x* designates something intrinsic only to *y* and something only metaphorical in relation to *z* in virtue of an extrinsic denomination with respect to *y*. What intrinsically and formally constitutes *z* is something other entirely than *x*. For example, the integral nature of a plant, which realizes its reproductive capacities by means of flowering, is an entirely different formal reality than what is involved and expressed conceptually in a smiling human face. In an intrinsic analogy of attribution, in contrast, *x* signifies one formal and objective concept. Both *y* and *z* really agree (*conveniunt*) in *x* on account of which *x* can be conceived as prescinding from what determines *y* to be *y* and *z* to be *z*.

Finally, as a consequence of what emerges from the third point, with an extrinsic analogy of attribution, *x*, because it does not involve one concept but several, cannot serve as a middle term of a demonstration. In an intrinsic analogy of attribution, however, *x* signifies only one concept and so can function as a middle term.[119]

Given the differences between extrinsic and intrinsic analogies of attribution, it is not surprising that Suárez rejects an extrinsic analogy of attribution between God and creatures. He does so for two main reasons. First, creatures are called 'being,' not on account of some extrinsic relationship to the being that is God, but intrinsically through their own proper—even if created—being. Second, a creature is not defined with respect to its being (*ens*) through God or in relation to God's existence (*esse Dei*), but, instead, through its own existence as such (*esse ut sic*).[120] Suárez meets a similar objection to the one presented above with respect to the

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117 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 7.1.1028a35.

118 *DM* 32.2.14 (vol. 26, 323): "Nam accidens non est ens per denominationem extrinsecam a substantia, sed per intrinsecam entitatem suam, secundum quam habet suam proprium esse…."

119 Ibid.

120 Ibid., 28.3.15.

substance-accident relation, and it is precisely the same objection that Marion raises: 'creator' and 'creature' are correlative terms. A 'creature' cannot be understood without reference to a 'creator' (or vice versa). It would be patently false to say, then, that a creature is not defined by a relationship to its creator. In response, Suárez concedes that the nature of a creature necessarily involves a relation to a creator. Nevertheless, he also insists that metaphysics is not concerned with a creature insofar as it is a creature but insofar as the creature is a *being*. "[I]f a relationship to God is added, for example, such that a creature is a being [*ens*], because it is a participation in the divine existence [*esse*], in such a way the creature is not now defined as a being, but insofar as it is such a being, it is without doubt a created [being]."[121] Since God and creature agree with each other in existing (*in essendo*) they can be considered according to one and the same objective concept.[122] Crucial for a science, the objective concept of being, as we discussed in Chapter Two, can prescind from the distinctive determinations of 'such and such a being' (*tale ens*) to arrive at a concept simply of 'being as such' (*ens ut sic*). That concept, moreover, can serve as a "medium of demonstration" (*medium demonstrationis*).[123]

While Suárez settles upon an intrinsic analogy of attribution in order to describe the analogical community that obtains between God and creature, on the one hand, and substance and accident, on the other, the question arises: how does such an analogical structure accommodate the absolute unity of being? How is an "unequal order or relation" with respect to its *inferiora*—requisite for analogy—found within a structure of being that expresses neither infinite nor finite being, neither substance nor accident? What determines Suárez's preference for an analogy of intrinsic attribution over the other forms of analogy (especially proper proportionality) and even over univocity itself has to do, as we shall see, with how attribution accommodates the inner dynamics of being that he had articulated in the first part of the *Disputationes metaphysicae*.

4. An Unequal, Inner Order

The account of being that Suárez has thus far presented, which, I suggest, will resolve the present difficulty is marked by (1) an existential character and (2) immanent transcendence. Both of these features are responsible for the similarity and dissimilarity within the community of being that, on the one hand, excludes univocity because of an inner dissimilarity and, on the other hand, impedes equivocity because of its similarity.

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[121] Ibid. (vol. 26, 18): "… nam si addatur habitudo ad Deum, verbi gratia, creaturam esse ens, quia est participatio divini esse, sic non iam definitur creatura ut ens est, sed ut tale ens est, nimirum creatum."

[122] Ibid., 2.2.8.

[123] Ibid., 28.3.15.

4.1 Inner Difference

Given our preceding discussion, it would seem that, from a logical point of view, the concept of being, insofar as it leaves unexpressed any determination or specification, is simply univocal. In considering Aristotle's division of terms in the *Antepraedicamenta* Suárez points out that, within the domain of logic (*dialectica*), the Stagirite never distinguished analogical terms from univocal or equivocal terms. Since analogical terms are a medium between the latter two kinds of term, they can be reduced (*revocari*) to that set of terms with which they most agree (*conveniunt*). Such being the case, analogical terms appear to be more properly reduced to univocal terms, which entails that the concept of being is univocal since: (1) it can serve as the middle term of a demonstration; (2) of itself and without any addition it is said of both the 'created' or 'uncreated'; (3) it is common according to name and concept.[124] Should we then say that, for Suárez, the concept of being is logically univocal—in the Scotistic sense—but metaphysically analogical? There are some interpreters, such as André Marc and Josef Santeler, who think so.[125] There is, moreover, a sense in which Suárez appears to countenance such a thesis: "Being is analogical also metaphysically according to the common objective concept, nevertheless according to logical definitions it appears to be contained under univocity."[126] Hoeres, for one, insists upon a logico-semantic interpretation that, while congruous with Scotus's project, is, as we shall soon see, questionable with respect to Suárez: "we can insist against Suarez that in dealing with univocation or analogy we are not primarily concerned with reality in itself, but with the possibility of a concept of being that surpasses the real diversity of all actual things."[127]

Other interpreters, however, such as Hellín and Doyle,[128] have denied that Suárez espouses logical univocity, which is congruous with Suárez's own reluctance when he adds the caveat: "it supports too excessively the univocity of being."[129] Nevertheless, even if it should be conceded that the concept of being functions univocally within a logical context and analogically within a metaphysical one, that does not in the slightest explain how, metaphysically, the objective concept of being can admit

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124 *DM* 28.3.20 (vol. 26, 20): "Sic igitur dici potest, juxta illas definitiones ens potius revocari ad univoca quam ad aequivoca, atque adeo in ordine ad usum dialecticum dici posse univocum, quia et potest esse medium demonstrationis, et simpliciter ac sine addito dicitur de ente creato et increato, et secundum nomen et conceptum communem."

125 Marc, "L'Idée de l'être chez saint Thomas et dans la scholastique postérieur," *Archives de Philosophie* 10 (1933): 48, n. 3; Santeler, "Die Lehre von der Analogie des Seins," *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 55 (1938): 28.

126 *DM* 28.3.20 (vol. 26, 20): "Ens autem est analogum etiam metaphysice secundum communem objectivum conceptum, quamvis secundum illas dialecticas definitiones videatur sub univocis comprehendi."

127 Hoeres, "Francis Suarez and the Teaching of John Duns Scotus on *Univocatio Entis*," 270.

128 Hellín, *La analogia del ser y el conocimiento de Dios en Suarez*, 227; Doyle, "Suarez on the Analogy of Being," 68, n. 114.

129 *DM* 28.3.20 (vol. 26, 20): "… nimium tamen favet univocationi entis."

an unequal order within itself. Reflecting on that question, Honnefelder asserts that the concept of being is such that, with respect to its "conceptual content," it cannot, "without contradiction," demand an ordered descent to its *inferiora*.[130] In short, the Suárezian conception of being would seem to be incapable of escaping the logic of univocity.

Yet, insofar as the matter is framed in terms of the "conceptual content" of being, any discussion regarding Suárez's account of the *analogia entis* is doomed to an inner contradiction that can only be resolved by conceding univocity. Accordingly, one is hardly surprised that those attuned to the dynamics of the Scotistic *conceptus entis*—such as Hoeres, Honnefelder, Courtine, and Boulnois—complain that the Suárezian account of analogy involves a contradiction. How, after all, can a "conceptual content" (*Begriffsgehalt*), of itself, demand an inner and unequal order? To say, for instance, that the conceptual content of the genus 'animal' demands that it pertain first to human beings and only subsequently to non-human animals would be absurd. Even if it were claimed that human beings, insofar as they are rational, are superior and more perfect in their animal natures than other non-rational animals, that would pertain not so much to the concept of 'animal' as it would to the concept of 'rational animal' in relation to the concept of 'non-rational animal.' Is not the same just as true with respect to 'being' relative to 'infinite being' and 'finite being' or 'substance' and 'accident'? For Scotus, the answer is 'yes,' since the doctrine of univocity is fundamentally a semantic doctrine that has its application within a logico-semantic sphere, rather than a metaphysical thesis about the nature of being itself.[131]

When approached with the same set of logico-semantic presuppositions, one cannot help but infer the conclusion—however violent an interpretation it may turn out to be—that the Suárezian *conceptus objectivus entis* is univocal. One should not doubt Marion's good faith when he asks how one can reintroduce a metaphysical inequality into a concept defined logically as 'univocal.'[132] No logical concept can carry within itself an inner inequality in relation to itself. But Marion's bewilderment stems from the fact that he views Suárez's account of analogy in terms of the same logico-semantic structure as Scotistic univocity. Yet, between the domain of logic and that of metaphysics there is a world of difference. It is the difference between that which is conceived (existent or not) and that which really *exists*. Furthermore, that which exists, exists in variegated and unequal (causal) relations across the entire spectrum of reality. What so many interpreters have failed to take

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130 Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens*, 292.

131 It is not surprising, then, that some with irenic sensibilities, such as Cyril Shircel, thought that the Scotistic doctrine of univocity could be entirely reconciled with Thomas Aquinas's notion of analogy. See Shircel, *The Univocity of the Concept of Being in the Philosophy of John Duns Scotus* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1942).

132 Marion, *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes*, 105.

into account, preoccupied as they are with their Scotistic or Thomistic presuppositions, is that, for Suárez, analogy is not a logical matter at all. He does not seek to parse the conceptual content of being in terms of its semantic content.[133] The basis of the community of being is not the diversity of beings insofar as they agree in some conceptual content; as Suárez has clearly said, their agreement is in existence itself.[134] Yet, that agreement in existence is what produces an analogical community since, as Doyle remarks, "things differ radically in their very aptitude for or orders to existence."[135] Some (God) enjoy existence *a se*,[136] others (creatures) that exist *in se* (substances) nevertheless receive that existence *ab alio*, and the existence of others still (viz., accidents) is characterized as *inesse*.

Thomas Aquinas similarly recognizes the role that existence plays in generating an analogical community. "Since *esse* is what is proper to one thing, it cannot be communicated to another."[137] Whereas Socrates and Plato, for example, may both be called 'human beings' univocally, with respect to their *esse* they are analogical.[138] For this reason, Thomas holds that, for univocal things, it is necessary that there be a community of nature or quiddity, but there can be no such community with respect to *esse*. Though Suárez differs from Thomas regarding the nature of the distinction between *esse* and essence in creatures, he too thinks that "everything that *exists* is necessarily singular and an individual."[139] The existence that an individual has precisely as an individual cannot be reduced to a univocal community, but, because of its irreducible uniqueness, can only enter an analogical community with other existents.[140]

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[133] Darge, "Grundthese und ontologische Bedeutung der Lehre von der Analogie des Seienden nach F. Suárez," 320.

[134] *DM* 2.2.8.

[135] Doyle, "Suarez on Analogy," 73. Ironically, Doyle, perhaps more than any other commentator, has drawn attention to the decisive role that existence plays in the Suárezian doctrine of being. I say 'ironically' because Doyle's 'logicalizing' interpretation of Suárez's metaphysics reductively portrays the Jesuit's notion of being in terms of non-contradiction, which would serve as the univocal common denominator, as it were, for all real beings (Doyle, "Suarez on Analogy," 76-88). Such an interpretation, as we have seen, ultimately disregards the notion of existence to the point, not only of *Seinsvergessenheit*, but, as Doyle puts it, metaphysical "nihilism." See Doyle, "Heidegger and Scholastic Metaphysics," *The Modern Schoolman* 49 (1972): 201-220; reprinted in *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548-1617)*, ed. Victor M. Salas (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010), 89-107. For the accusation of 'nihilism,' see ibid., 90. I have already discussed the problems with such a 'logicalizing' interpretation in Chapter Two.

[136] *DM* 20.1.14.

[137] Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 11 (ed. Leonine, vol. 22.2, 78): "… unde cum esse quod est proprium unius rei non possit alteri communicari…."

[138] Ibid.

[139] *DM* 6.2.2 (vol. 25, 206): "… omnis res, quae *existit* necessario est singularis et individua" (emphasis mine).

[140] This is not to suggest that all univocal predication is impeded on Suárez's account because he disagrees with the Thomistic thesis regarding the real otherness between *esse* and essence in creatures. There remain, for Suárez, in addition to individual unity, formal unity and universal unity. The distinctions he introduces among these, for instance, between the individual and common nature,

Yet, for Suárez, analogy requires more than the diversity of metaphysical incommunicability that existence produces. Diversity within the community of being is necessary for analogy but it is not sufficient, for equivocity likewise involves diversity. The difference between the diversity that pertains to *aequivoca a casu* and *analogia* is such that the latter involves ordered relations (viz., similitude or proportionality). For Suárez, it is the set of asymmetrical causal relations between, on the one hand, God and creatures and, on the other hand, between substances and accidents, that generates a relationship of similitude. That asymmetry, he thinks, is inscribed within the very structure of being itself. Whereas God is being *per essentiam* and thereby enjoys being independently or *a se*, creatures enjoy their being *per participationem* or *ab alio* through their causal dependence upon God: a creature "depends much more upon God than an accident does upon a substance."[141]

In saying that God is being *per essentiam* and that a creature is like God to the extent that it participates in God for its own being, Suárez does not mean to suggest that a creature, when regarded in terms of being, is considered precisely in terms of its relation to God.[142] Such a consideration would not yield a concept of being as such—that is, "as entirely abstracted and only conceived confusedly under the aspect of existing outside of nothing"—but a concept of a 'finite being.'[143] Again, metaphysics concerns creatures not insofar as they are creatures but insofar as they are beings. It is being itself that is diversely and unequally structured:

> Being itself [*ipsum ens*] howsoever much abstractly and confusedly conceived, by virtue of itself requires [*postulat*] this order, that first and per se it pertains to God as quasi-complete, and through [God] it descends to what remains, which exists only in relation to and dependence upon God.[144]

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need not be real but only conceptual. See *DM* 5.2. The universal unity he identifies, moreover, would be sufficient for the purposes of univocal predication. Needless to say, addressing Suárez's account of universals—especially in the contexts of debates between realism and nominalism—would take us far afield from the scope of the present study. For a helpful treatment regarding that subject, see Daniel Heider, *Universals in Second Scholastisicm: A Comparative Study with Focus on the Theories of Francisco Suárez S.J. (1548-1617), João Poinsot O.P. (1589-1644) and Bartolomeo Mastri da Meldola O.F.M. Conv. (1602-1673)/Bonaventura Belluto O.F.M. Conv. (1600-1676)* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 2014).

[141] *DM* 28.3.16 (vol. 26, 18): "… omnis ergo creatura est ens per aliquam habitudinem ad Deum, quatenus scilicet participat vel aliquo modo imitatur esse Dei; et quatenus habet esse, essentialiter pendet a Deo multo magis quam pendeat accidens a substantia." Cf. Heider, "Is Suárez's Concept of Being Analogical or Univocal?" 29.

[142] Ibid. (vol. 26, 19): "Quod non est ita intelligendum, ut existimetur creatura, concepta sub abstractissima et confusissima ratione entis ut sic, dicere habitudinem ad Deum."

[143] Ibid. (vol. 26, 19): "… cum sub eo conceptu [entis] non concipiatur creatura, ut ens finitum et limitatum est, sed omnino abstrahatur, et solum confuse concipiatur sub ratione existentis extra nihil."

[144] Ibid., 28.3.17 (vol. 26, 19): "… ipsum ens quantumvis abstracte et confuse conceptum, ex vi sua postulat hunc ordinem, ut primo ac per se, et quasi complete competat Deo, et per illud descendat ad reliqua, quibus non insist, nisi cum habitudine et dependentia a Deo."

The same structure of priority and posteriority holds at the predicamental level with respect to the analogical relationship between substance and accident.

> Being [*ens*] per se essentially requires [*postulat*] this order—that it descends first to substance then to an accident, and to a substance per se but to an accident according to substance and to a relation thereof.[145]

Rolf Darge draws attention to the fact that much of the confusion stemming from the "standard interpretation" (*Standarddeutung*) of the Suárezian doctrine of analogy centers upon a mischaracterization of the "*quantumvis*" (which means 'howsoever' or 'to whatever degree') as found in that above-quoted text.[146] The text, as I just cited it, states "*ipsum ens quantumvis abstracte et confuse conceptum*" (*DM* 28.3.17), but the '*quantumvis*' is often read among Suárez's interpreters as if it were '*inquantum*' instead. Given that '*inquantum*' means 'inasmuch' or 'insofar,' the logical interpretation is inevitable since being is considered not in terms of itself but only "insofar" or "inasmuch" (*inquantum*) as it is "confusedly and abstractly conceived."[147] This logical reading places emphasis upon conceptualization and the correlative "conceptual content" (*Begriffsgehalt*). Hoeres and Honnefelder, because they read *inquantum* in place of *quantumvis*, view the Suárezian position through the same lens as Scotistic univocity. Such an abstract concept of being has the character of "neutrality" or "indifference" with respect to its *inferiora*.[148] That "indifference," Courtine insists, amounts to "a fundamentally univocal thesis" (*une thèse fondamentalement univociste*).[149] The emphasis that these interpreters place upon the conceptual content of the *conceptus objectivus entis* ineluctably excludes existence from consideration. But existence is the lynchpin in Suárez's doctrine of analogy.

This is no mere squabble over finesse in translation but a concern for interpretive coherence. If '*quantumvis*' is read as though it were '*inquantum*' ('insofar'), then, as Daniel Heider justly complains, it is impossible to make sense of the role the term '*postulat*' ('demands' or 'requires') plays in Suárez's text. There, we are told that "being itself demands" that it descend *first* to God (substance) and *then* to creatures

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145 Ibid. 32.2.11 (vol. 26, 322): "… ens per se essentialiter postulat hunc ordinem descendendi prius ad substantiam quam ad accidens, et ad substantiam per se, ad accidens vero propter substantiam, et per habitudinem ad illam." Cf. ibid., 32.2.26.

146 Darge, "Grundthese und ontologische Bedeutung der Lehre von der Analogie des Seienden nach F. Suarez," 316. Among those Darge names as partisans of the "standard interpretation" are Josef Santeler, Luis Martinez-Gomez, Walter Hoeres, John Doyle, and Ludger Honnfelder. Darge does not suggest, however, that each of these thinkers is in agreement with one another in all aspects of their interpretations regarding Suárezian analogy.

147 Ibid., 328. For the various ways in which Suárez himself utilizes '*inquantum*' see Darge, *Suárez' transzendentale Seinsauslegung und die Metaphysiktradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 60-62.

148 Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique*, 525: "… pour Suarez, l'unité d'un concept commun et abstrait—susceptible d'être appréhendé *praecise*, dans sa neutralité ou son indifférence vis-à-vis de ses 'inférieurs.'"

149 Ibid., 533.

(accidents).[150] One rightly asks how an "abstract concept"—the result of reading '*quantumvis*' as '*inquantum*'—demands an ordered descent? It cannot, which is why so many interpreters think that the Suárezian *conceptus entis* is really univocal. In actual fact, however, Suárez's point is not that being is merely an *abstract concept*—bearing whatever minimal (intensional) conceptual content—that demands an ordered descent. Rather, his claim is that *being itself* (*ipsum ens*)—insofar as it is a dynamic, concrete existential reality that is realized across different orders, grades, and modes—requires an unequal order in relation to its *inferiora*. Suárezian analogy is founded on the diversity and community of being, which arises from things themselves. The following texts—the first two pertaining to the analogical relationship between God and creatures and the latter two pertaining to the relationship between substance and accident—make clear that, as Suárez sees it, being itself, as found within various things (*in rebus*), gives rise to the unequal order of priority and posteriority requisite for analogy:

> The common character [of being] of itself requires such a determination with an order and relation to one.[151]

> This analogy of being is entirely founded upon and arises *from things themselves*, which are thus subordinated to one thing to which they necessarily refer insofar as they are beings.[152]

> From which we also understand this analogy to be diverse from others [i.e., extrinsic analogies], since it exists in the *thing itself*, and from itself it derives its name without any doing [*negotiatione*] from our intellect, but only by such an imposition of name to signify such a formal character, which of itself does not pertain [*respicit*] to several unless with an order and relation of them among themselves.[153]

> Therefore being of itself demands this order: to be first in a complete substance, but then it is discovered to be in an incomplete [substance] in relation to a complete [substance].[154]

From these texts it is evident that Suárezian analogy does not pertain to a simply semantic or logical structure,[155] as is the case with Duns Scotus's doctrine of univocity. Rather, analogy is attuned to the structure of being that is realized among

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150 Daniel Heider, "Is Suárez's Concept of Being Analogical or Univocal?," 35.

151 *DM* 28.3.21 (vol. 26, 21): "… ipsamet ratio communis ex se postulat talem determinationem cum ordine et habitudine ad unum…."

152 Ibid., 28.3.22 (vol. 26, 21): "… haec analogia entis omnino fundatur et oritur *ex rebus ipsis*, quae ita sunt subordinatae ut necessario ad unum referantur quatenus entia sunt…" (emphases mine).

153 Ibid., 32.2.16 (vol. 26, 323-24): "Ex quo etiam intelligimus hanc analogiam esse diversam ab aliis, quia *in re ipsa* existit, et ex vi eius derivatur ad nomen absque ulla negotiatione intellectus nostri, sed sola impositione talis nominis ad significandam talem rationem formalem, quae ex se non respicit plura nisi cum ordine et habitudine eorum inter se" (emphases mine).

154 Ibid., 32.2.26 (vol. 26, 327): "… ergo ens ex se postulat hunc ordinem, ut primario in substantia completa, deinde vero in incompleta in ordine ad completam reperiatur…."

155 Darge, "Grundthese und ontologische Bedeutung der Lehre von der Analogie des Seienden nach F. Suarez," 320.

diverse beings in a determinate order first with respect to God (or substance) and then to creatures (or accidents).

It is this unequal order and set of relations within the structure of being that precludes it from being univocal. We recall from the controversial passage in *DM* 2.2.36 that, according to Suárez, it is not sufficient for univocity that a concept is one in some fashion. Rather, univocity requires that a concept relate equally and indifferently to various *inferiora*.[156] Now, in light of Suárez's express teaching regarding analogy, the distinction between univocal and analogical concepts, which both involve unified structures of some sort, becomes clearer. The analogical concept might be one—and most simply so—but, of itself and for reasons already mentioned above, it is not entirely uniform, "which uniformity and identity univocals require in their nature, and which is how the definition of univocals should be explained."[157]

4.2 Inner Unity

Still, if diverse relations to existence serve to highlight the diversity of beings according to unequal orders, paradoxically, existence itself also generates a unified metaphysical community. What this means is that existence is the source of both the difference and similarity that analogy demands. As Suárez puts it:

> God and creature agree in the nature [*ratione*] of real being and differ in terms of being-such, without distinction between the common and proper character, neither on the part of God, as is certain, nor on the part of the creature, since no degree [*gradus*], if it is real and positive, can be prescinded in a creature which does not have agreement with God in the nature of being.[158]

If God and creature (as well as substance and accident) differ from one another in terms of their diverse aptitudes to existence, they nevertheless agree (*conveniunt*) precisely in terms of that existence.[159] Though God and the lowly blade of grass, for example, are vastly diverse and related as the infinite to the finite, they are nevertheless alike, even if only faintly so, insofar as they stand outside nothingness in virtue of their proper existence. This is not to suggest that both God and creature have an equal metaphysical or existential footing. A creature's existence is vastly different insofar as it thoroughly depends upon God as its cause, whereas God alone exists *a se*.

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[156] *DM* 2.2.36 (vol. 25, 81): "… necesse est ut aequali habitudine et ordine respiciat multa, quod non habet conceptus entis, ut latius citato loco exponemus."

[157] Ibid., 28.3.21 (vol. 26, 21): "… quam uniformitatem et identitatem requirunt univoca in ratione sua, et ita debet definitio univocorum exponi."

[158] Ibid., 6.9.19 (vol. 25, 212): "Deus et creatura conveniunt in ratione entis realis et differunt in ratione talis entis, absque distinctione inter rationem communem et propriam, neque ex parte Dei, ut est certum, neque ex parte creaturae, quia nullus gradus praescindi potest in creatura, si positivus et realis est, qui non habeat illam convenientiam cum Deo in ratione entis." Cf. Doyle, "Suarez on the Analogy of Being," 74.

[159] Ibid., 2.2.8.

While the asymmetrical causal relations between God and creature may differentiate the community of being in terms of analogy, the similarity that obtains within that community on the basis of existence also serves to unify them. A creature, whose own existence is a *vestigium Dei*, can serve as a launching point for an investigation into the existence of God. Similarly, from the existence of accidents, one can move to a consideration of the existence of substances.[160] If all real beings agree analogically with one other in terms of their existence, then they can be known in terms of that existential agreement and conceived according to one objective concept that is "transcendent" and "most simple."[161] Suárez writes:

> Also, this agreement is founded in the act of existence [*actu essendi*], which is just as formal in the concept of being,[162] whence also the argument goes, that just as the objective concept of being or of existence is of itself one, so is the concept of being.[163]

Suárez further explains that the objective concept prescinds from all the particular and proper characteristics (*rationes*) that differentiate beings and render them determinate in some manner.[164] Yet, if the objective concept prescinds from those *rationes*, that concept must remain unified within itself since it does not "actually and distinctly include its *inferiora*" (*actu et distincte includente inferiora*). If it were the case that different beings were considered in terms of their status as 'such being' (*tale ens*), it would not be a simple and unified objective concept of being that is at stake.[165] Nevertheless, the objective concept of being is not (despite what Courtine claims) indifferent or "neutral" with respect to its *inferiora*.[166] Suárez's thesis of being's immanent transcendence precludes such indifference. While the transcendental character of being (*ratio entis*) is one in itself insofar as it is abstract, the immanent *rationes*, by which the diversity of beings are constituted in their existence and in which being is included, remain diverse and identical with the particular beings they constitute.[167]

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160 Ibid., 2.2.14 (vol. 25, 74): "… et ideo dicitur saltem esse vestigium eius propter aliquam convenientiam et similitudinem in essendo; qua ratione ex esse creaturae investigamus esse Dei, et similiter ex esse accidentis, esse substantiae."

161 Ibid. (vol. 25, 75): "… quia omnia entia sub illa ratione et convenientia sunt cognoscibilia…."

162 On this point cf. Thomas, *Summa theologiae* I, q. 4, a. 1, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, vol. 4, 50): "… ipsum esse consideratur ut formale et receptum…."

163 *DM* 2.2.14 (vol. 25, 75): "Item illa convenientia fundatur in actu essendi, qui est veluti formale in conceptu entis, unde etiam sumitur argumentum, quod sicut conceptus obiectivus ipsius esse seu existentiae unus est, ita etiam conceptus entis."

164 Ibid., 2.2.15.

165 Ibid., 28.3.18 (vol. 26, 20): "Nam ens, prout includens inferiora secundum proprias rationes, non est ens tantum, sed est ens finitum et infinitum, substantia et accidens, et caetera, quae, sicut non possunt secundum proprias rationes uno conceptu a nobis concipi, ita nec uno nomine significare…."

166 Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1990), 525: "… pour Suarez, l'unité d'un concept commun et abstrait—susceptible d'être appréhendé *praecise*, dans sa neutralité ou son indifference vis-à-vis de ses 'inférieurs'".

167 *DM* 28.3.21.

Given being's immanent transcendence, Suárez describes the objective concept of being as a 'confused concept' (*conceptus confusus*). What he means by this is that the concept of being already potentially includes, as it were, its *inferiora*. If being is contained within every difference and mode of being, then it is contained in what constitutes each being precisely as this or that being or as such-and-such a being. As such, being can in no way be indifferent. Yet in describing the concept of being in terms of 'potentiality' has not Suárez simply returned to Duns Scotus's notion of the *conceptus entis* as a *conceptus simpliciter simplex*? As utterly determinable, the *simpliciter simplex* concept of being stands in potency to the actualization of determining concepts pertaining to ultimate differences or modes. We also recall that, as Scotus understands it, there is a distinction *ex natura rei* between being and its differences. As a result, the indeterminate potentiality of the concept of being amounts not only to its univocity—since 'being' as said of 'infinite being' and 'finite being' meets the requirement for univocity that Scotus lays out—but also to its absolute indifference or neutrality.

The matter is otherwise for Suárez in a critically decisive fashion. While he describes the *conceptus entis* in terms of potentiality with respect to its *inferiora*, that 'potentiality' is marked by 'inclusion.' Being includes its own *inferiora* insofar as being is contained within the very differences and modes that constitute those *inferiora* in the first place. This containment is simply a function of Suárez's notion of immanent transcendence, to which he directly alludes in his discussion of analogy. Though the diverse existential aptitudes realized across the spectrum of real being are not expressed by the objective concept of being, the objective concept is really identical—even if rationally distinct—with the specifying and differentiating *rationes* that make up the diversity of beings.

Suárez's transcendental approach, as I have mentioned in preceding chapters, is decidedly non-Scotistic in nature. In the case of 'finite being,' for example, Suárez does not resolve it into two concepts ('finite' and 'being') that, though distinct *ex natura rei* from each other, enter into composition. Such a compositional model was sufficient for Duns Scotus's purposes since 'being' is not predicated '*in quid*' of its ultimate differences or modes.[168] For Suárez, in contrast, to be finite is already just to be being, and so, likewise, is it the case for any other mode or kind of being. To determine or contract the objective concept of being to be this or that kind of being is not to add some extraneous difference *per modum compositionis* from outside the immanent structure of being itself, but to express more clearly the nature of some particular *ratio* already contained in being.[169] The difference between 'finite being' and 'being,' for example, is a difference within one and the same reality that comes about solely through an act of reason. One can consider a 'finite being' in

[168] Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 3, n. 131.
[169] *DM* 2.6.7.

terms of its finitude and thus one has a more express (*expressior*) concept of that thing than if one were to conceive that same thing simply in terms of being.[170] To conceive a substance, for example, is to conceive something that is in itself *simplex* and irresolvable into two simpler concepts (e.g., 'being' + 'substantial mode'). The difference between the concept of a substance and the concept of a being does not turn upon a distinction *ex natura rei* that intervenes between the two antecedent to any *actus intellectus*. Rather, one and the same unified reality is considered either more or less expressly. To conceive of a substance is to conceive being itself except more determinately or precisely. Similarly, to conceive a substance in terms of its being is not to conceive something really other than the substance but to conceive the exact same substance more confusedly or less distinctly.

For Suárez, then, being is, of itself, never indeterminate or metaphysically neutral. Being is always already within the very differences that are contained (albeit confusedly) within the objective concept of being. When Marion claims that the concept of being is "indifferent to individual perfections," he expresses the Scotistic thesis more or less accurately, but he fails to consider how Suárez's distinct transcendental vision has decisive implications for analogy.[171] Contrary to what interpreters such as Hoeres and Marion claim, the objective concept of being is not something other than the reality of things themselves. Just as there is no distinction *ex natura rei* between being and its modes, so is there no such distinction between the objective concept of being and its *inferiora*.[172] Along these lines, Heider reasons that "we can understand the *inferiora* both as the very objective concepts of being, and also as *inferiora* of the objective concept of being."[173] If those "actual things" are diverse in terms of their being, as Suárez claims that they are, then the unity of the objective concept of being can only be—on account of that diversity—an analogical unity. Between the Scotistic *conceptus entis* and the Suárezian *conceptus objectivus entis* there is a world of difference. The former is *ex natura rei* distinct from all of its differences and modes. It is a vicious abstraction that is *simpliciter simplex* and can suffice for univocity. The latter, however, is always related to the existential aptitudes of its diverse *inferiora*, which it contains confusedly within itself and which is reciprocally contained transcendentally within each of them as well. As such, the Suárezian objective concept of being cannot be reduced to the univocal *conceptus simpliciter simplex* of Duns Scotus.

> Although the character [of being] as common and abstract is one in itself, the characters constituting singular beings are diverse, and through them as such each and everything is constituted absolutely in the existence of being [*esse entis*]. Finally (what pertains most to the issue) the common character

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170 Ibid.

171 Marion, *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes*, 104.

172 Victor M. Salas, "Francisco Suárez, the Analogy of Being, and its Tensions," in *Suárez's Metaphysics in its Historical and Systematic Context*. Contemporary Scholasticism, ed. Lukáš Novák, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 100.

173 Heider, "Is Suárez's Concept of Being Analogical or Univocal?," 36.

> [*ratio*] of itself demands such a determination with an order and relation to one, and therefore, although it is the same according to a confused character, just as it is one, nevertheless, it is not uniform, which uniformity and identity univocals require in their nature.[174]

5. Conclusion

It is telling that, apart from Doyle, most interpreters who view Suárez's defense of the unity of the *conceptus entis* as evidence of his alleged commitment to univocity ignore the immediate philosophical context of Suárez's thinking, as well as its immediate philosophical aftermath.[175] Just prior to Suárez, Pedro da Fonseca held simultaneously (1) the unity of the concept of being and (2) the analogical character of that concept.[176] Fonseca certainly did not regard maintaining both claims as a contradiction. Unlike Suárez, however, Fonseca, as already noted, attempts to integrate attribution with proper proportionality, while giving proper proportionality pride of place.[177] Almost immediately after Suárez, the Jesuit Hurtado de Mendoza also thinks that the concept of being is immanently transcendent and utterly simple in its unity. Hurtado takes the concept of being to be analogical, although, owing to his commitment to formal precision, develops analogy in a fashion contrary to Suárez's account of the *per prius-per posterius* strategy.[178] None of these Jesuit metaphysicians is reluctant to balance the unity of the concept of being with analogy.

This metaphysical situation would seem to indicate at least one of two things: (1) either the entire late scholastic tradition—including even Suárez—has reduced analogy to univocity, as Marion contends; or (2) the very meaning of analogy itself has, since its groping articulation in the thirteenth century with Thomas Aquinas, undergone significant development so that viable alternatives are created to what Thomas himself proposed as well as to what the Thomistic school, especially Cajetan, advanced. Though there are Jesuit philosophers, such as Rodrigo de Arriaga and Richard Lynch, who eventually defend univocity, the first alternative is reductively simplistic and refuses to consider seriously Suárez's metaphysical reasons for supporting analogy.

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174 *DM* 28.3.21 (vol. 26, 21): "… ideoque, licet ratio communis ut abstracta sit in se una, tamen rationes constituentes singula entia esse diversas, et per illas ut sic constitui unumquodque absolute in esse entis. Deinde (quod ad rem maxime spectat) ipsamet ratio communis ex se postulat talem determinationem cum ordine et habitudine ad unum, et ideo, licet secundum confusam rationem sit eadem, sicut est una, nihilominus non uniformis, quam uniformitatem et identitatem requirunt univoca in ratione sua…."

175 Cf. Doyle, "Suarez on the Analogy of Being," 69, n. 114; 72, n. 123. Courtine does cite a number of post-Suárezian thinkers (e.g., Baumgarten, Clauberg, Keckermann, Scheibler, etc.) but none of the Jesuit's scholastic successors.

176 Fonseca, *Commentaria in libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis* (ed. Köln, 1615), lib. 4, c. 1, q. 1, sec. 2.

177 Ibid., lib. 4, c. 2, sec. 7.

178 Hurtado, *Universa philosophia*, Logica, d. 9, s. 4, subsec. 3, n. 57 (Lyon, 1624).

Furthermore, in advancing his claim that late scholasticism, Suárez included, is guilty of a steady march toward univocity, Marion can only maintain such a claim at the price of completely ignoring the transcendental character of being in such metaphysical doctrines, certainly at least in the cases of Suárez and Hurtado de Mendoza. For both Jesuit metaphysicians, the transcendental character of being directly governs—as we have just seen to be the case for the former—their thinking with respect to analogy. Moreover, failing to take seriously the metaphysical grounds for analogy to which Suárez appeals in his exposition, equally fails to take seriously the reasoning behind other thinkers during that time, such as the aforementioned Arriaga and Lynch, who appreciate the need to formulate considerable arguments against the analogical theories of Suárez and Hurtado, in order to defend univocity.[179] Surely, those Jesuit scholastics who are committed to univocity are not tilting at windmills when they attack the Suárezian *analogia entis*. It is worth pointing out that Arriaga, who sides with univocity, does not even bother to contend with the Thomist conception of analogy. The reason for this lack of engagement is not due to some oversight but most likely because, if developed along the lines of proper proportionality, such analogical conceptions ultimately involve a multiplicity of concepts rather than a unified objective concept of being. If one champions univocity over analogy, then it would seem that the only worthy opponents of such a thesis are the views that Suárez defends. After all, if it is the case that the Suárezian doctrine of analogy is simply a disguised form of univocity, one need hardly expend any effort to refute it precisely for the sake of defending univocity itself. Yet, such is what occurs in the aftermath of the Suárezian metaphysics. In this regard, Piero di Vona is entirely correct when, after surveying a variety of late Jesuit scholastic treatments of analogy, he says, in direct contrast to Marion's conclusion, that "after Suárez the concept of analogy did not enter into decadence, despite the advent of rigorous theories defending the univocity of being."[180]

If being is said in many ways, and if being and unity are the same in reality, while differing only in reason, then unity itself must also be understood in many ways. Without a doubt, there is a univocal unity that pertains to the unity of a genus or a species. Nevertheless, according to both Thomas and Suárez (as well as any number of other thinkers), there is also an analogical unity. The question here is: what introduces sufficient difference within such a unity to render it analogical? Suárez answers, as we have seen, in terms of immanent transcendence, which has at its core being's diverse aptitudes to existence. Immanent transcendence safeguards the

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[179] For Arriaga see *Cursus philosophicus*, Logica (Lyon, 1669), d. 11, sec. 3, nn.18, 25; for Lynch see *Universa philosophia scholastica*, Metaph. (Lyon, 1654), lib. 5, tr. 2, c. 1.

[180] Di Vona, *Studi sull'ontologia di Spinoza*, 46: "… dopo Suárez il concetto di analogia non entrò in decadenza, nonostante che si preparasse l'avvento di teorie rigorose sostenenti univocità dell'ente." For a masterful discussion of analogy in the doctrines of various Jesuit scholastics cotemporaneous to Suárez see ibid., c. 1.

unity of the concept of being while preserving its inner, ordered diversity, which means that the Suárezian objective concept of being cannot be reduced to Scotus's *conceptus simpliciter simplex*. The objective concept of being may not express its differences, but it is far from neutral with respect to them. For Suárez, being itself is caught within the tension between identity and difference or similarity and dissimilarity, which is just to say that being is, on account of its own inner existential and immanently transcendental structure, analogical.

Conclusion

The lines of investigation comprising the present study all converge upon and radiate from the existential core of Francisco Suárez's doctrine of being. From the very beginning, it is a relation to existence that determines the subject matter of metaphysics (*ens in quantum ens reale*).[1] Fictions or impossible objects (i.e., *entia rationis*), because they lack a 'real essence' or an aptitude to existence,[2] cannot exist and are therefore excluded from the metaphysician's purview. Indeed, they cannot even be conceived directly and per se. Of themselves, such "shadowy beings," insofar as they lack existence, are simply unintelligible.[3] Suárez's metaphysics thus remains attuned to the real structures of that which exists.

Far from reducing being to the 'thinkable' or to the 'logically possible,' the determination of the adequate object of metaphysics makes clear that, in standing as the condition of being, existence is also the condition for what can be thought. There can be no doubt that the Suárezian metaphysics has had a profound influence on subsequent scholastic thinkers as well as upon early modern philosophers. With respect to the former, the degree of Suárez's influence has yet to be fully appreciated among scholars. Fortunately, renewed attention being given to late scholastic thinkers is beginning to change that situation. What we see is that, while it is far from the case that Suárez's theses are adopted universally or left unchallenged, he is—much like Thomas Aquinas or Duns Scotus—regarded as one with *auctoritas*. Arguably, then, Suárez can be considered as establishing the high watermark of late scholasticism. More familiar to most readers are the canonical early modern philosophers whom Suárez has influenced one way or another. Descartes, Christoph Scheibler, Leibniz, Wolff, and even Arthur Schopenhauer all cite Suárez in the course of developing their diverse metaphysical viewpoints. It is not surprising, then, that the Jesuit theologian, associated as he is with these Enlightenment philosophers, has been accused of being the progenitor of early modern ontology. Still, the ontological doctrines of early modernity are not so much organic developments of the inner principles contained within the Suárezian metaphysics, but are rather, as José Pereira puts it, an "anamorphosis" of Suárez's actual teaching.[4] If Gilson can exclaim "God save us from our disciples,"[5] how much more should

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[1] *DM* 1.1.26.

[2] Ibid., 2.4.7.

[3] Ibid., 54.proem.1.

[4] Pereira, *Suárez: Between Scholasticism and Modernity* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2007), 126-29.

[5] Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1952), 106.

one be spared from the metaphysical conclusions of those who do not even profess fidelity to the same set of principles and assumptions? If it is the case, as Courtine argues, that much of early modern ontology—that of canonical figures as well as late scholastics—unfolds in a supertranscendental direction,[6] it nevertheless remains an act of extreme interpretive violence to accuse Suárez himself of having embraced supertranscendentality.[7] His commitment to an existential metaphysics excludes such a conception.

In determining the object and orientation of metaphysics, for Suárez, existence itself serves as the ultimate resolution of the meaning of being. Though he operates within the Avicennian metaphysical tradition, from which the Jesuit appropriates a certain quidditative approach to being, he radically refashions the conceptual tools deployed within that tradition. If Thomas Aquinas, for instance, could retool the Aristotelian "dynamism of form" into the dynamism of existence,[8] as Gilson argues, why should other thinkers within the medieval and late scholastic traditions be incapable of effecting similar metaphysical transformations with respect to quiddity or essence? The philosophical tradition that passes from Avicenna to Duns Scotus is an undeniable point of reference for Suárez, for he clearly develops his own metaphysical theses in constant conversation with that tradition, among others. Nevertheless, between the Persian thinker and the Jesuit from Granada, there is a world of difference that amounts to the simple but profound distinction between 'to be' and 'not to be' or, what is the same, between that which exists and that which does not. Whereas Avicenna leaves existence aside as irrelevant to what constitutes an essence *secundum se*, Suárez is of an entirely different mind. An essence without existence is "entirely nothing."[9] As we have seen, to claim that something non-existent (x) is possible is not to attribute any kind of intrinsic ontological reality to x. Rather, possibility is resolved in terms of the cause that effects x. The ultimate cause is just God, the fullness of being, which means that Suárez resolves possibility itself in relationship to being rather than being in terms of possibility. The metaphysical world of Suárez is not a possible world fundamentally populated by existentially-neutral—but nevertheless real—essences eternally awaiting metaphysical actualization. Rather, whatever possibility that does pertain to the world is grounded in actual being and ultimately in the divine being who alone exists *a se* and, by His creative act, draws all creatures out of their nothingness into existence.

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[6] Courtine is not alone in his assessment of the supertranscendental direction that seventeenth-century thought would take. John Doyle's research has also shown—perhaps even more conclusively than Courtine—that both Jesuit and secular philosophy move in the direction of supertranscendentality. See Doyle, *On the Borders of Being and Knowing: Some Late Scholastic Thoughts on Supertranscendental Being*, ed. Victor M. Salas (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2012).

[7] Cf. Jan Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought: From Philip the Chancellor (ca. 1225) to Francisco Suárez* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 642.

[8] Ibid., 185.

[9] *DM* 31.2.4.

Further still, it is precisely insofar as all beings (*entia*) agree in existence that their resulting metaphysical community is truly transcendental.[10] Yet, as discussed in Chapter Three, the transcendental theory that Suárez develops is markedly different from that of Duns Scotus. Whereas Scotus introduces a *distinctio ex natura rei* between being and its ultimate differences as well as its transcendental attributes, being is, for Suárez, "immanently transcendent,"[11] which means that it is contained within all of its differences and diverse modes.[12] While Scotus's transcendental theory portrays the *conceptus entis* as *simpliciter simplex* and thus as entirely indifferent to its determinations or *inferiora*, no such 'indifference' is at play within the Suárezian framework. Being pertains to the innermost structures of all its differences and *passiones*, which are the expressions of existence's own intelligible structure. While that structure might give rise to a diversity of concepts, this is simply because, as Suárez sees it, the richness of existence cannot be adequately captured in its entirety by the finitude of the human intellect.[13] Nevertheless, the distinction of concepts that arise from our consideration of being does not imply a distinction within being itself.

As we have seen, there is an important implication of immanent transcendence: it precludes univocity in favor of analogy. Here, once again, a key distinction between Suárez and Scotus emerges. Those who readily equate Suárez's transcendental doctrine with that of Scotus are quick to infer being's univocal character and express abject amazement when Suárez himself says otherwise. Yet, if being is immanently included in all of its differences, then an unequal set of relations is itself necessarily inscribed within the structure of being. The *conceptus objectivus entis* is not akin to a Platonic idea standing above the particular entities that instantiate it (i.e., the *inferiora*) with the pristine indifference of a (univocal) logical concept. Quite the contrary, being is ultimately a matter of what exists. But that which exists, exists in various ways and according to different causal determinations. Whereas God exists *in se* and *per essentiam*, creatures exist *ab alio* and *per participationem* in God. Such inequality in existence and relations of independence and dependence impede the possibility of univocity, for which reason Suárez concludes that being is simply analogical.

Does the existential doctrine that resides at the core of the Suárezian metaphysics mean that the Jesuit has more in common with the preceding medieval tradition than with his early modern successors? As I indicated in the introduction, my intention is not to adjudicate Suárez's place in the history of philosophy. The temptation to paint in broad brushstrokes is almost too strong to resist and, in Suárez's case, has led to innumerable oversimplifications and misrepresentations.

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[10] Ibid., 2.2.8.
[11] Ibid., 2.4.14.
[12] Ibid., 2.5.16.
[13] Ibid., 7.1.5.

Be that as it may, I think it is at least safe and fair to say that Suárez's metaphysics remains attuned to the same set of theological concerns and creedal commitments that directed the metaphysical projects of his medieval predecessors. Whether he is the consummator of medieval thought, as Pereira puts it, is, I believe, open to debate.[14] Research devoted to medieval philosophy has revealed that the strands of medieval thought are too irreducibly distinct to allow for the possibility of a "consummation," at least one that is not overly facile. More accurate would be the claim that Suárez contributes his own voice to the polyphonic effort of medieval thought's striving to give intelligible expression to the content of divine revelation. Whether or not a "consummator," Suárez offers a harmonic contrapuntal perspective to the diverse theological projects of that era. Albertus Magnus, Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, et cetera, each contribute, along with Suárez, his uniqueness to that theological discourse, but they are far from discordant since they operate in the same Christian theological key. Yet it is against that key that so many canonical figures of early modernity dissonnantly clashed, whether wittingly or not.

Such being the case, it should come as no surprise that existence would be the note according to which Suárez would tune his own voice. If God is 'He who is,' as so many medieval theologians taught, then creatures, precisely insofar as they exist, reflect and celebrate that divine existential reality. Between the "*sum qui sum*" of God (Ex. 3:14) and the '*id quod est*' of the creature, there must be some metaphysical continuity, a community that allows something of God—Being itself—to be known. As we have seen on several occasions throughout this study, Suárez is concerned to preserve one's cognitive access to that divine reality. He is convinced that God can be known naturally by the human intellect, not only for metaphysical reasons but on the basis of his theological commitments; for, as Suárez himself points out, "*Invisibilia enim ipsius, a creatura mundi per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta, conspiciuntur.*"[15] Existence is, for Suárez, that immanently transcendent Ariadne's thread that allows him to navigate the labyrinth of finite being and reach the conclusion that the God who has disclosed Himself in revelation stands on the other side of our metaphysical horizon as a sublimely intelligible, existential reality.

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[14] Pereira, *Suárez*, c. 1.

[15] Rom. 1:20.

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